1989
2015

FOCUS

The Official Journal Of

THE ASSOCIATION OF SRI LANKAN GRADUATES OF CANADA

இலங்கைப் பட்டதாரிகள் சங்கம் — கனடா



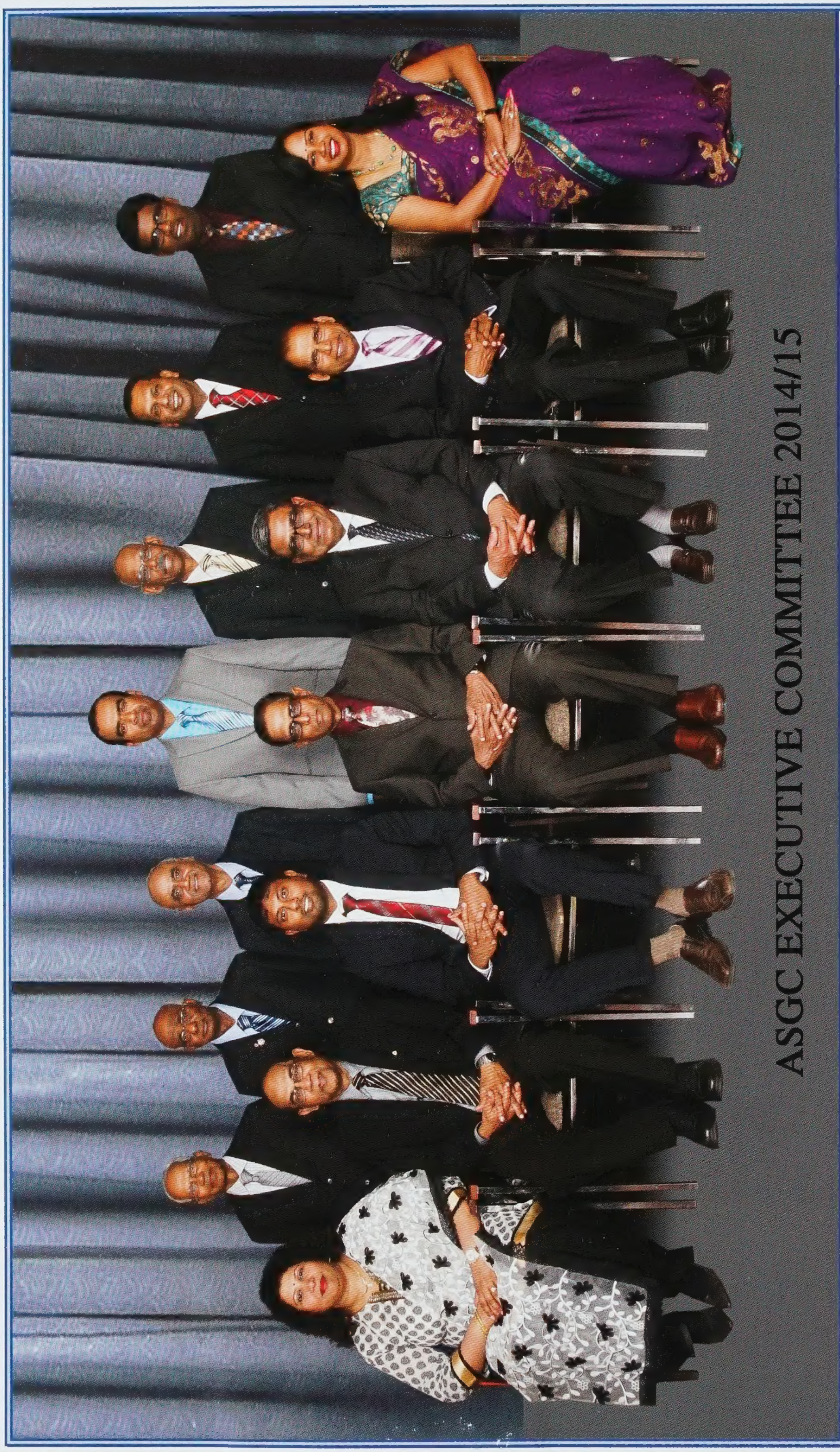




Audience & Organizers
Career Counseling Workshop - Markham

25TH ANNIVESARY SPECIAL EDITION: 25TH APRIL 2015

www.asgc.ca



ASGC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2014/15

Seated (L-R): Suganja Sinnathamby (Asst.Treasurer), Dr.K.Theivendirarajah, Thiva Kulasingam (Treasurer), Pon Balendran (President), Nel Ketharanathan (Vice-President), Ram C.Ramanathan (Secretary) and Raveena Rajasingam.

Standing (L-R): Dr.S.Sivanayagamoorthy, Dr.V.Manivannan, Samy Ramachandran, Suresh Tharmalingam, Dr.E. Balsundram, Raj Thavaratnasingam (Asst.Secretary) and Yaso Somalingam.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As the president of the Association of Srilankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC), I am very delighted to write this message to the Silver Jubilee issue of the Focus magazine, which is to be released during the dinner to be held on April 25, 2015, to celebrate its twenty five years of existence and serving our community. It is indeed both an honor and privilege to serve as the president of ASGC, during its Silver Jubilee year. A mile stone in its service to our community, we all are proud of its achievement and being part of it. We remain optimistic about the future as we anticipate to expand our services with wider spectrum of activities.

Now, it is a time to reflect the twenty five years of service and the vision and foresight of the pioneers who established ASGC in 1989. It was established as a not for profit organization and as a common forum connecting the university graduates of Srilankan origin to help resolve the issues related to their educational and professional qualification, to overcome the initial obstacle in finding employment in their respective field as new immigrants in to Canada. This was facilitated through organizing workshops seminars and networking to share knowledge, experience, expertise and connections to meet the individual's need to fit in to their career.

As years passed, with diminishing need for its original objective, the association widened its spectrum of activities, to cater the needs of emerging younger generation and organizing community awareness programs including drawing the attention of Canadian Government to the issues faced by the immigrants and Tamils in Srilanka. The main focus was on high school students and recent university graduates, to improve their educational and employment prospects, by organizing career counselling and guidance for higher studies workshops. The purpose of these workshops were to help the students make well informed decisions about their higher education and employment prospects, to suit their potential and likings. These workshops were well attended and very much appreciated by the participants.

The asset of the association over the years of existence has been the reputation it earned among community and educational bodies with whom it collaborated and the appreciation and benefit of the participants in the workshops. We are proud of its accomplishments and much more could be done in the future. Our resources were limited, but our passion and enthusiasm to make a difference were encouraging. Our success could be attributed to the generous contribution of the executive committee members who donated their time, their energy, and their resources. There were many special people including young professionals from various industries who joined us in our endeavor and made it possible to create the name that we have today. To all those people and all those who joined in our journey, a big thank you. Without you all we would not be where we are now.

Thank you.

P.Balendran.B.Sc.Eng.,P.Eng.
Consulting Engineer.
President,ASGC.

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FROM THE DESK OF SECRETARY



After serving for more than 22 years in the executive committee of the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) in various capacities such as President, Secretary and Committee Member, I feel satisfied and happy that the Association had significantly raised the professional and educational profiles of the community to a high level. I can't believe that the Association has completed 25 years of service to the community. Equally, I feel proud how we gradually improved the ASGC constitution & administrative procedures year by year, expanded our network with the other associations in Canada and delivered useful projects to the community.

In March 2009, as a non-profit organization run by graduates, the Association was invited to the parliament hill in Ottawa do a presentation to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development on a topic titled "Canada and the Crisis in Sri Lanka". Similarly in November 2007, the Association made a presentation to the Standing Committee at the Ontario Legislative Assembly on Bill 124 related to "Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act" which subsequently received Royal Accent in March 2007.

Still I remember the days, how we were able to help the children from our community through career guidance workshops held annually and they were able to select suitable career paths. Now we are delighted to see them shining in a vast spectrum of professions. Many graduates from Canadian and foreign universities, attended ASGC run workshops, joined in the ASGC mentorship programs and were able to get recognition to their qualifications, completed correct training programs and obtained jobs in their own or related professions.

Moreover, we have organized seminars and workshops in topics related to various professions and thousands of professionals participated in them and got benefitted in all these years. We were also successful in our efforts to make Tamil as a recognized credit course subject in Toronto District School Board schools. ASGC continues to buy or collect very useful text and reference books and educational equipment, and send to universities back home. For many years, we have also sponsored and supported needy children to continue their university education in Sri Lanka. In April 2009, ASGC successfully helped innocent people displaced from Vanni Area through Canadian Red Cross Society by raising funds from here.

We believe that doing sincere service with a positive creative intention is the best one can do without involving politics. It is my view that as professionals in our community, we should stop promoting flattery about our past, and instead assist increase awareness in our community to focus on helping our children to reach higher level of academic and professional excellence so that they could play a noteworthy role in the Canadian community at large. It is our collective responsibility to help our community to excel as professionals, business leaders and good Canadian, and help build up an excellent history for Tamils in Canada.

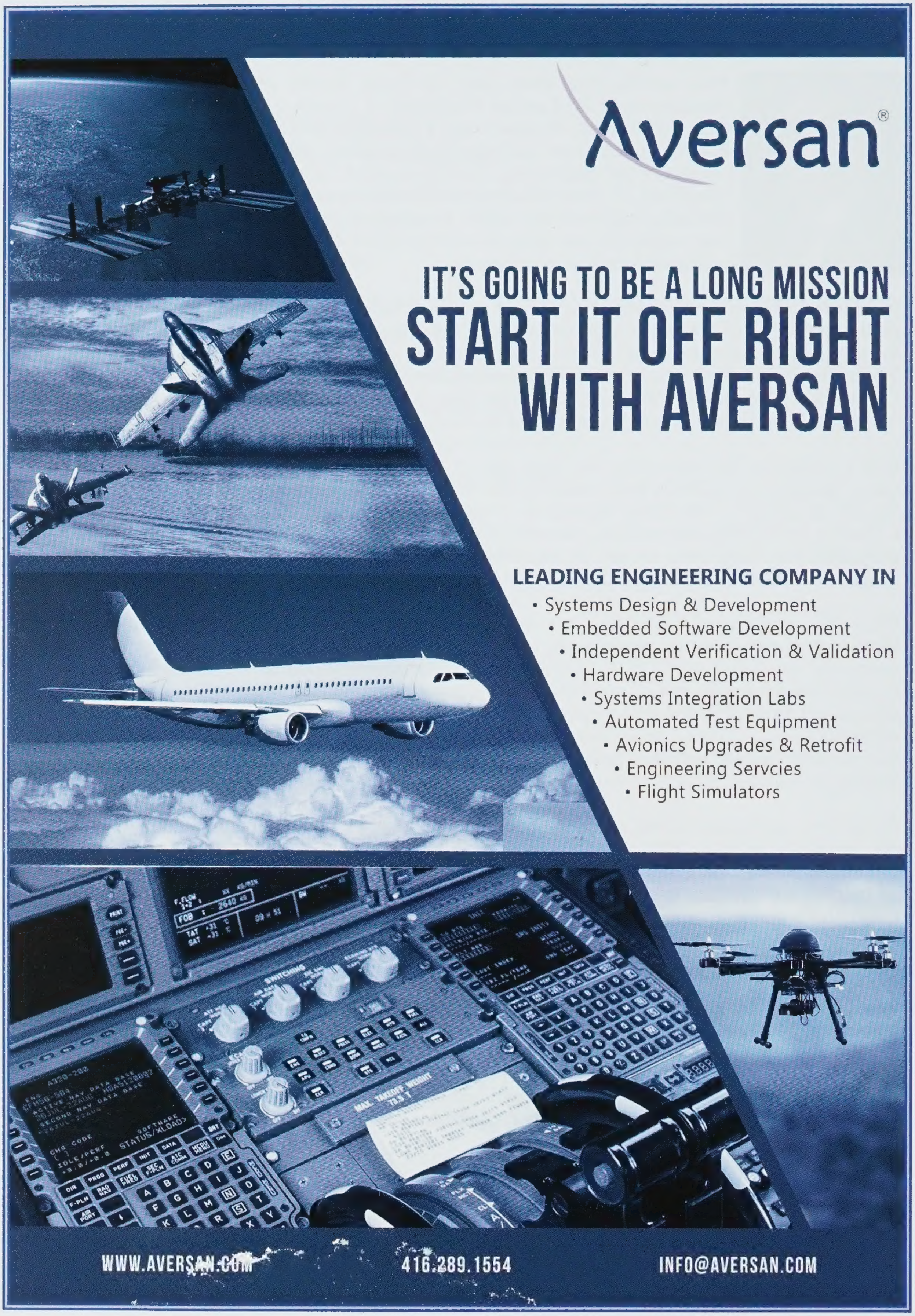
To all the ASGC executive committee members, present and past, I wish to offer my sincere thanks individually and collectively for all their valuable services. On behalf of the Association, I request the professionals and the educated youth from our community to join the Association and help continue to raise the quality and content of our services to the community, and create a high profile image for us in Canada. I am confident we can succeed in all our endeavors with the support of the community. I complete this message with two impressive meaningful phrases:

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." - Mahatma Gandhi

"We can do no great things, only small things with great love". - Mother Teresa

Thank you.

Ram C. Ramanathan, M. Sc., P. Eng.
Honorary Secretary, ASGC


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York Region DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



Message from the Trustee

April 25, 2015

It is with great pleasure that I extend my greetings and well wishes to the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) and its members on your 25th annual dinner and the releasing of the Focus Magazine for 2015.

I continue to have the pleasure of working with ASGC on a number of initiatives that directly benefit students and parents in the Markham community. This includes their annual Career Counselling sessions which have been organized for the past fourteen years, eight of which have been held in the Markham area with the support of York Region District School Board. In addition to helping the next generation, the Association also provides an important forum for graduates of Sri Lankan origin who reside in Canada to network and share information.

The steady growth and its ability to collaborate with other organizations are directly correlated with the high level of commitment possessed by the executives and members of ASGC. I wish ASGC, its executives and members continued success and look forward to continuing to support the organization and its future initiatives.

Sincerely,

Juanita Nathan
Trustee | York Region District School Board
City of Markham – Ward 7 & 8





Toronto District School Board

Trustee
Parthi Kandavel
Ward 18, Scarborough Southwest

April 25th, 2015

Dear Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada Friends & Family:

It is with great pride and pleasure on behalf of the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) I congratulate the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) on your Silver Jubilee. As a teacher and a school trustee, I acutely understand and appreciate the important and relevant work your organization has provided over 25 years to the community.

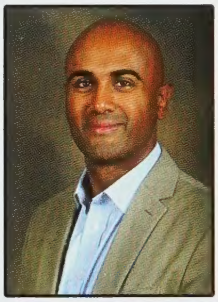
I commend the valuable services ASGC provides our youth through your mentoring and career development. As an immigrant community, it is difficult to navigate and explore all the various career opportunities available in our diverse and complex economy. The assistance you have made accessible has been a boon to our community, benefitting countless numbers. Furthermore, the guidance you have bestowed upon new immigrants is testament to values we hold dear as a society – that we have a duty to serve the society that we have benefitted from.

On behalf of the TDSB, I salute the tremendous hard work, sacrifice, and dedication the ASGC has unwaveringly committed to our community. Your organization's leadership has set and continues to set a great example to the newer groups beginning to serve.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our message. Please enjoy the night and celebrate the good work that has been accomplished. The TDSB applauds your service and I wish you the very best for the next 25 years and beyond!

Sincerely,

Parthi Kandavel
TDSB Trustee
Ward 18 – Scarborough Southwest



MARKHAM

Frank Scarpitti
Mayor

April 25, 2015

MESSAGE FROM MAYOR SCARPITTI

On behalf of Members of Council and the City of Markham, I am pleased to extend a warm and sincere welcome to all those attending the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) Dinner in celebration of 25 years of selfless service.

Since September 1989, the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada, a registered non-profit organization has provided valuable services to the community especially in elevating the educational and professional profiles of the community. In addition to the popular annual "Career Guidance Workshops for the High School Students & Their Parents", it has been conducting programs such as computer programming competition, job search for graduates, seminars on topics related to the professions, seminars on social and health issues to name a few.

As the most diverse city in Canada, we are grateful for the support system that the ASGC provides to their community in making the City of Markham a more welcoming place to work, live and play.

I extend a sincere thank you to the members of the ASGC for volunteering their time to a worthwhile cause. As Mayor, I wish everyone a wonderful evening.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Scarpitti

Frank Scarpitti
Mayor



The Corporation of the City of Markham, Anthony Roman Centre, 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario L3R 9W3
Tel: 905.475.4872 · Fax: 905.479.7775 · fscarpitti@markham.ca · www.markham.ca

MARKHAM



April 21, 2015

Logan Kanapathi
Councillor, Ward 7

GREETINGS FROM MARKHAM

I would like to congratulate the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) for their valuable support to the community and extend my best wishes on the occasion of the Dinner to celebrate **"25 Years of Selfless Service".**

Grass roots organizations are vital for engaging communities in productive activities to improve the quality of life. ASGC has been playing that role very well over the past 25 years! I truly appreciate the members of ASGC for dedicating their valuable time in sharing academic and professional expertise and experience. I have first hand witnessed the highly successful career counselling workshops you provide for the youth especially the high school children. As such, I would like to thank the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada for creating these important outlets for our youth to obtain direction and network to succeed in their career goals.

As Councillor, I am very proud of your efforts in sharing knowledge and assisting young people with their career dreams. I wish you all the best for your future endeavours, and look forward to seeing your organization grow and flourish in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Logan Kanapathi
Councillor- City of Markham

The Corporation of the Town of Markham · 101 Town Centre Boulevard, Markham, Ontario L3R 9W3
Tel: 905.479.7748 · Fax: 905.479.7763 · e-mail: lkanapathi@markham.ca · www.markham.ca

ASGC'S SELFLESS SERVICE FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS

For over tha past 25 years, the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) which is run by volunteers with university education, has been the leading Association of professionals in Canada serving the Sri Lankan community. The programmes and activities have been, and continue to focus on providing a forum for the members of the Sri Lankan community, particulaly for graduates qualified in Sri Lanka as well as in Canada to meet, interact, share and exchange educational and professional experience for their professional development, and helping and assisting new immigants looking for work and job opportunities, and assisting students from Canadian High Schools and their parents help them in selecting educational courses available in different Canadian universities to choose professions according to their educational aptitude and their capabilities.

In the 1990s, many foreign qualified graduates found that their degrees were not recognized in Canada and so had to start life all over again. During the first ten years since inception, the ASGC which was registered as a charitable organization, concentrated its efforts to help these graduates including teachers, to obtain recognition to their foreign credentials by having dialogue with various professional licencing bodies and postsecondary educational institutes. The Association was able to convince these professional bodies to comprehend the standard of Sri Lankan university education by connecting them to the community through organized discussions and producing course contents from Sri Lankan universities. The ASGC was immensely successful in its effort and many graduates in various fields who have succeeded in holding higher positions in Canada forever owe gratitude to the ASGC for clearing a big hurdle that was prevalent at that time. Consequently, special programs were created at a few Canadian universities for foreign qualified teachers to fulfill the requirements to get into teaching profession in Canada.

Moreover until year 2005, ASGC has been collecting series of textbooks, computers and laboratory equipment and sending them to Sri Lankan universities for their use. In addition, the Association arranged with members to provide financial assistance to tens of needy students at the university of Jaffna who faced financial hardships in continuing their studies. Every year the ASGC conducted picnic and cultural shows for the Association members & their families to meet and mingle. Around the year 1996, the Association was also successful in its efforts to make Tamil as a recognized credit course subject in TDSB schools.

Around the year 1993, the Association realized the importance of guiding the high school children from the community to encourage them to opt for postsecondary education and facilitate them to select their career paths. It created opportunities for these children to learn about the available career choices, how to select the high school subjects to suit their intended career path and identify the alternative avenues to meet the financial impact of such education. The series of workshops involved bringing successful recent graduates who are currently working to interact with high school students so that the students may clear their doubts and gather more information about following a career path. The ASGC conducted such career guidance workshops for high school students for over fifteen years. Thousands of high school Tamil children were benefitted by them following these career guidance workshops ASGC conducted with help from the Toronto District School Board, York Region District School Board and Peel District School Board. Most of those children are doing very well in their professions.



ASGC'S SELFLESS SERVICE FOR THE PAST 25 YEARS... CONTD....

Similarly the Association had conducted more than 10 workshops to the benefit of over 1000 new graduates, irrespective of whether Canadian qualified or foreign qualified, and helped them to get suitable jobs/training programs befitting their qualifications and experience

In November 2007, the Association made a presentation to the Standing Committee at the Ontario Legislative Assembly on Bill 124 related to "Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act" which subsequently received Royal Accent in March 2007. Similarly in March 2009, as a non-profit organization run by graduates, the Association was invited to the parliament hill in Ottawa do a presentation to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development on a topic titled "Canada and the Crisis in Sri Lanka".

For many years in the past, the ASGC organized fund raising car wash event to encourage volunteerism among the community members and donated the funds to Centenary Hospital in Scarborough. Furthermore, organizing seminars aimed at improving and enhancing the knowledge of subjects of interests and importance to the community in general and the graduates in particular, including computer programming competitions, career fairs & opportunities for networking, and professional counselling for new immigrants, etc. The most recent one was "Job Connect 2012" that was held in April 2012 mainly aimed at connecting new graduates with work places.

In April 2009, ASGC successfully helped innocent people displaced from war torn Vanni Area in Sri Lanka by raising funds from here and channeling through Canadian Red Cross Society. Very frequently, the Association organized events and activities focusing on finding solutions to problems of serious concern surfacing in the Sri Lankan Community from time to time. For example it conducted an information seminar on Diabetes with the support of Canadian Diabetis Association and many attendees benefitted.

In conclusion, the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada has had a positive impact on the lives of thousands of Sri Lankans in Canada over the course of the last twenty five years and we will continue to do so in the future. We like to sincerely thank all the volunteers, from inside the executive committees, as well as those outside the committees for supporting the Association activities for the last 25 years. We request young graduates from our community to join the ASGC and expand its services to benefit the community.

Ram C. Ramanathan, M. Sc., P. Eng.
Honorary Secretary

PAST PRESIDENTS OF ASGC

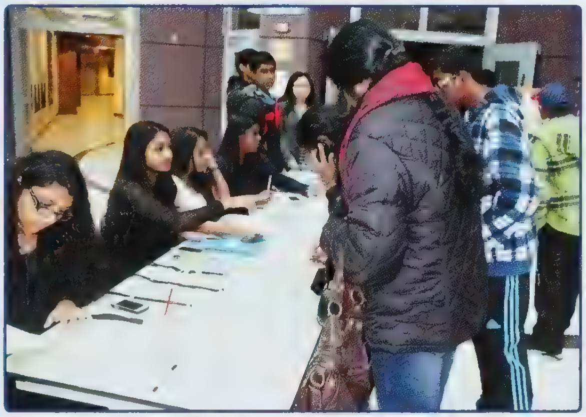
YEAR(S)	NAME OF PAST PRESIDENT	QUALIFICATIONS AND CURRENT EMPLOYMENT	
1989, 1990,1991	Nanni Pradeepan	B.Sc. (Electr. Eng) (Moratuwa Univ., SL) M.Eng. (Electr. Eng) (U of T, Canada) P.Eng. Managing Director, New Dawn Energy Solutions	
1992, 1993	A. S. Kandasamy	B. Sc. (Ceylon) O.C.T. Retired Teacher	
1994, 1995	Sam Sathiamoorthy	B. Sc. (Civil Eng) (Peradeniya Univ., SL) M.A.Sc., (U of T, Canada) P.M.P. Senior Project Manager, SNC Lavalin Inc.	
1996, 1997	M. Atputhanathan	B.Sc. B. Ed. O.C.T Retired Teacher	
1998, 1999	K. Wijeyathungam	B. Sc., (Agr. Sc) (Peradeniya Univ., SL) M. Sc. (Agr. Sc.) (Obihiro Univ., Japan) Senior Business Systems Analyst, RBC	
2000, 2001	Sivanesan Sinniah	B. Sc. B. Ed. O.C.T. Retired Community Advisor, Toronto District School Board	

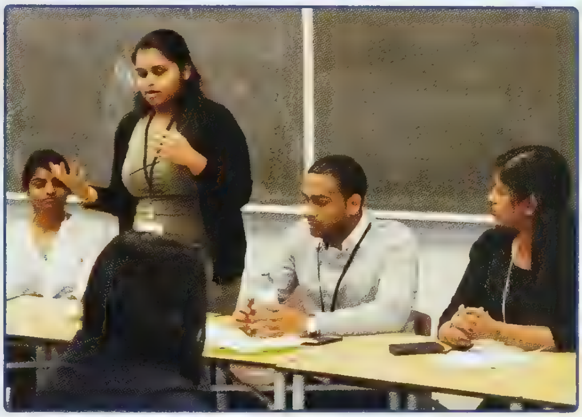
PAST PRESIDENTS OF ASGC CONTINUED

2002, 2003, 2005	Ram C. Ramanathan	B.Sc. (Civil Eng) (Peradeniya Univ. SL) M.Sc (Hydrogeo.) (Birmingham Univ., UK) P. Eng. Project Manager/Engineer, City of Brampton	
2004, 2007	K. Theivendirarajah	B.Sc. (Ceylon) Ph. D. (London) Retired Microbiologist, Consultant, Pharmaceutical Division, Alpha Laboratories Ltd.	
2006	Pan Kanagaretnam	B.Sc (Ceylon) Retired Ceylon Civil Service. Deceased in 2008	
2008	SurrenBalendran	B.Sc (Electr. Eng) (Peradeniya Univ. SL) M.B.A (Canada) P.Eng. Program Manager, CBC, Montreal	
2009	Yoga Arulnamby	B.Eng (Civil) A.M.ASCE A.M.I.E Chief Operating Officer, Yarlmetal Fabrication Inc.	
2010, 2011,2012	Yaso Somalingam	B.Sc., (BE) Arch Director, Cantam Group ltd.	
2013, 2014	PonBalendran	B. Sc(Civil Eng) (Peradeniya Univ., SL) P. Eng. Consulting Engineer (Ontario) Director, MNA Engineering Ltd	

CAREER COUNSELING WORKSHOP - 2014











CAREER COUNSELING WORKSHOP - 2014 CONTINUED



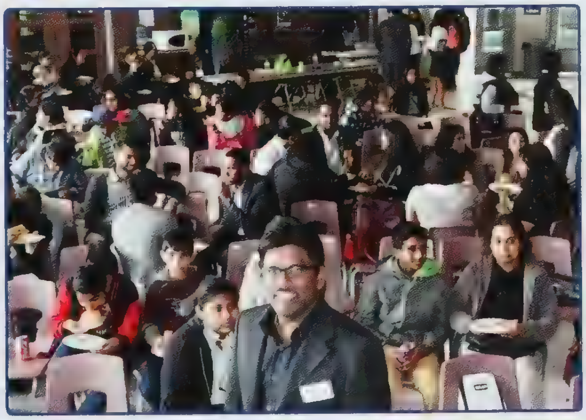














CAREER GUIDANCE WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MARKHAM 2014

Compiled by Dr. V. Manivannan (ASGC)



The annual Guidance for Higher Studies workshops for High School Students organized by the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC) in partnership with the York Region District School Board (YRDSB), Canadian Tamil Alumni Association (CTAA), Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA) and the Sri Lankan Accountants Association (SAAC) was held on Saturday November 1, 2014 to promote higher education among Tamil youths. This extremely useful event for high school students and their parents were conducted from 10 am till 4 pm at Middlefield Collegiate Institute. This workshop was designed to serve as a forum for dissemination of information, exchange of ideas, and sharing of academic and professional experiences. The moderators and the panelist are selected on the basis of their success in their chosen profession and their ability to relate to youth. As usual, ASGC conducted the event free of charge and provided free lunch to about 250 students and parents who attended the workshop.

The plenary session of the workshop started with the welcome speech by the ASGC President Mr. Pon Balendran. Following the welcome speech, Mr. Philip Parappally, Director of Education expressed YRDSB's happiness in supporting such an excellent workshop. Thereafter Mr. Cecil Roach, Superintendent of Education spoke about the significance of the workshop and thanked ASGC for organizing this as an annual event. This was followed by an inspirational keynote address made by Dr. Mahesan Srivamadevan, Cardiologist at South Lake Regional Health Centre. He emphasized the importance of decision making and encouraged students to go out of their comfort zone and to take risks. He told parents to give a lot of credit for their children since they are already carrying more of a workload and stress than what their parents at their teenage years. A final word of his advice to the students was even though life is not fair at all times, they could change it by working hard to succeed and then go on to lead and change the unfairness.

Ms. Suganja Sinnathamby explained the format of the workshop and said that two sessions, one in the morning and other in the afternoon would cover fields of study: Health & Life Sciences, Engineering & Physical Sciences, Creative Industries & Humanities and Social & Business Studies. Each field of study would be addressed by 6 or 7 guest speakers, chosen on the basis of their academic and professional success. The students would be able to ask questions and the discussions would take place in an informal and friendly atmosphere. She also mentioned that the parents would have a separate session to deal with the issues specific to parents. Mr. Prasahanth Srichandramohan and Mr. Thiva Kulasingam briefly introduced all the presenters to the audience. The list of presenters with their qualifications and their places of work are given in the list on the following page.

Workshop Speakers (for students)

Health & Life Sciences	Engineering & Physical Sciences	Creative Industries & Humanities	Business & Social Studies
Medical Doctor, Nurse, Chiropractor, Physiotherapist, Occupational therapist, Microbiologist	Computer, Civil, Chemical, Electrical, Environmental engineering, Chemist, Technologists	Media, Computer animation, Graphic design, Food & Nutrition, Languages	Accountancy, Finance, Actuary, Public Policy, Social Work
Moderator Ms. Sujani Sivanatharajah BSc., MPH (Epidemiologist, Public Health Agency of Canada)	Moderator Dr. Nirusha Thavarajah Ph.D., LL.M. (Lecturer, Dept. of Physical & Environmental Sciences, U of Toronto)	Moderator Ms. Sumu Sathy – B.Sc, Mandaraa.TV Host, Independent Producer	Moderator Mr. Ashok Srithavanathan, BBA, CPA, CA (Associate at RBC Capital Markets)
PRESENTERS			
Ms. Gowthamie Yogeswaran BSc, MBA (Senior project Analyst, University Health Network)	Mr. Gartheepan Rasaratnam, BEng. (Software Development Consultant, Avanade)	Ms. Keera Ratnam BA (Art Studio owner, Paintings Auctioneer)	Ms. Darshika Selvasivam BA, BSW (Pathways to Education, TDSB)
Dr. Subarna Thirugnanam BSc, MD, FRCPC (Critical Care Medicine, Markham Stouffville Hospital)	Mr. Kobihan Karunakaran (Civil engineering student, Co-op placement at 407 East Extension)	Ms. Thana Rajah BA (Senior Communications Advisor, Service Ontario - Ministry of Government & Consumer Services)	Mr. Jorge Kalairoopan (Ombudsman's office, City of Toronto)
Ms. Sayanthini Ramesh RPN Diploma (Nurse, Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre)	Ms. Thulasi Nandakumaran BEng. (Electrical Engineering, Pivotal Labs, Agile Engineering)	Ms. Stephanie Theva, BBA (Assistant Product Manager, Lindt & Sprungli)	Ms. Rajanthi Manivannan BA, CMA Operations & Strategy Manager, Rockefeller Foundation)
Dr. Elilnilaaa Manoharan HBSc, DC (Chiropractor, Oshawa Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Clinic)	Mr. Visnu Siritharan BEng. (Design Engineer, Advanced Micro Devices)	Ms. Manivillie Kanagasabapathy, HBSc, MA, MPP (Project Manager, South Asian Women's Centre)	Ms. Thaksa Sethukavalan, CPA, CA (Auditor, Office of the Auditor General of Ontario)
Dr. Dharini Mahendira BSc, MD, FRCPC (Rheumatologist, St. Michael's hospital & Assoc. Professor at U of Toronto)	Mr. Suthakar Sabapathy BASc, MBiotech (Manager, Health Economics and Reimbursement, Janssen Inc.)	Mr. Ajayan Param, B.A (User Interface Architect, Prompt Alert Inc.)	Mr. Ravi Manoharan BSc (Sergeant at 14th Division, Metropolitan Toronto Police & MSc Candidate)
Dr. Shironika Thambirajah BKin, DC (Chiropractor & Medical Acupuncture Provider)	Mr. Sujeevan Anton Christy (Nuclear Engineer, Project Lead/Technical specialist, RCM Technologies)	Ms. Ruth Siri (Catering Supervisor, York U. & Owner, Garden of Eden Catering)	Ms. Nilani Logeswaran, BA (Press Secretary, Ministry of Education - Ontario)
Mr. Nathee Selvendran BSc, DCh (Chiropodist, Foot Clinics in Waterloo & Brampton)	Mr. Thusharan Manmatharajah BASc (Civil Engineer, Vujeva Survey)	Ms. Agalya Balamohan BSc, B.Ed - OCT (Durham District School Board)	Mr. Pranavan Ganeshalingam, iBBA (Economist, Ministry of Finance - Ontario)






HomeLife/GTA
SOLD

CAREER GUIDANCE WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CONTD....

The Parents' Session was chaired by Dr. E. Balasunderam, ASGC

The Panel Speakers involved in the Parents' session are:

Ms. Camille Logan	Principal, Inclusive School & Community Service, YRDSB
Mr. Kandeephan Ganeshalingam	Vice-Principal, Milliken Mills HS
Ms. Rima Ishtiaque	Vice-Principal, Markham Gateway PS
Ms. Nicole Baxter	Teacher, Middilefield CI
Ms. Suganja Sinnathamby	Teacher, Maple HS
Mrs. Sethukavalan	Parent
Mr. Nel Ketharanathan	ASGC
Mr. Suresh Kumar	ASGC

The high school students were able to receive vital information about the selection of courses and the career paths of different professions from the young graduates in the Tamil community. Similarly parents collected very valuable information from a panel of speakers who have been involved with parent. school and community issues.

Finally all the students and parents gathered in the main auditorium for summary and recap of the discussions. The moderators of each group presented a summary of the items discussed in their sessions. The panel of presenters and moderators answered the questions raised by the participants. Towards the end certificates were presented by ASGC to the presenters and to the volunteers in appreciation of their contribution. The workshop ended with a vote of thanks delivered by the secretary of ASGC, Mr. Ram Ramanathan.

In talking with some of the students at the end of the event, it was very clear that they really appreciated having the opportunity to get presenter's advice and to listen to their experiences.

<u>Following are some of the comments made by the presenters at the event</u>

The career workshop for high school students organized by the Graduates Association was an excellent forum to share advice on career planning with the next generation of aspiring professionals. The students had many practical questions. The workshop was very well organized, and it was a pleasure to take part in this endeavour.

Dharani Mahendra
Associate Professor, U of Torornto
Rheumatologist, St. Michael's Hospital

WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS....CONTD....

I had the privilege of being the moderator for the Health & Life Sciences breakout session. As my first time at such a workshop, I was extremely proud to be a part of such a fostering community and was speechless about the opportunities being created for the new generation of talented and bright children.

During the Health & Life Sciences session, the students and I heard stories from doctors, nurses, chiropractors, and podiatrists about their work. Some of our community's brightest individuals lined the panel seats and patiently answered questions about their decade long journeys to be where they are today. The panelists left students with great advice that not only focused on education, but rather university lifestyle, extra-curricular activities, living away from home, and application processes. It was really great to see keen students focusing on questions other then marks, and applications but also about what 'a day in the life' of such a health professional looked like - I imagine, it was to visualize themselves in a similar role. I was proud to see the years of wisdom being shared and passed on to the new generation. Thank you to The Graduates Association for giving me such a wonderful opportunity, and want to wish the organization many more years of great service for the community.

Sujani Sivanantharajah
Outbreak Epidemiologist, Public Health Agency of Canada
Executive Director & Founder, Tamil Health Association

As this was the first time I was attending and participating in such an event, I didn't know what to expect. I was overwhelmed by the exceptional organization of the event, the professionalism of the facilitators, and the deep discussions that took place in regards to career, opportunities, and the need to follow ones passion. The facilitators did a great job focusing the discussion, and the participants, along with their parents seemed to derive great insights. It was a privilege to be a part of such an event where professionals had an opportunity not only to connect with each other but with those interested in following similar path.

Suthakar Sabapathy
Manager, Health Economics
Janssen Inc.

The 2014 Career Guidance Workshop was an excellent opportunity for students within our Tamil community to become introduced to the various vocational opportunities that exist today. The event was a success with a number of young professionals sharing not only their own educational experiences, but also their professional journey, including the challenges that lead them to where they are today. This workshop has created an avenue for many young people to be exposed to the realities of the professional sphere, as well as the diversity of professions that exist, a part from the traditional career choices.

Dr. Shironika Thambirajah, BKin(Hons.),D.C.,Dip. Ac.
Chiropractor & Medical Acupuncture Provider

ASGC - CAREER GUIDANCE WORKSHOP FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

By: Haran Sureshkumar



Hello, my name is Haran Sureshkumar.

Let me tell you a little bit about myself. I am a Grade 8 student at David Suzuki Public School. On October 2014, I attended the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada's Career Guidance program.

The Career Guidance Program is a day experience for high schoolers to talk to Guidance Councillors that take various fields as a daily routine, such as engineering, medicine, financing and much more about the job. When I first went to the Career Guidance program I felt very shy of asking questions to the Guidance Councillors about the different courses, but they first talked to us and asked us if I had any questions and I did.

In the program there are four types of conferences you can go to. There is the Business and Social Studies conference; the Engineering and Physical Conference; the Creative Industries and Humanities conference and there is a Health, Medical and Life sciences conference.

For the day you get to choose two of these conferences to go to. When you go there they first introduce themselves and what job they have. They also provide you with what high school subjects they took to get into the University program. They ask you if you have any questions about their big achievement. Then they tell you their life story of how they became who they are today. They will also tell you how and who inspired them. After the first conference is done we take a small break. Then you attend the second field of jobs that you are interested in. When you are finished we all gather for a meeting to talk about what we learnt in the conferences and to thank the guidance councillors for coming to this great event we have.

When both of my conferences finished I finally knew what I was going to take in high school and University even though I was really young. I really feel that everyone should try the Career Guidance Program for their own benefits. Overall my first time at the program was a success.


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KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY DR. MAHESAN SRIVAMADEVAN

November 1st, 2014.

At the association of Sri Lankan graduates career guidance workshop at Middlefield collegiate institute.



I would first like to thank the committee of the association of Sri Lankan graduates for this honor and opportunity to address our young people. And I like to thank the youth and parents who have come for the opportunity to speak to you. While I thought of many who deserve this accolade more, I wasted no time in accepting to speak. That is because like everyone else, I feel I have ideas that are worth sharing. Also because I have always admired this group for their selflessness in organizing this event. I fondly remember at least 3 other events in which I have participated with them.

In most of them, I was asked to speak about opportunities in the field of medicine. They occurred in various phases of my career. First, as a medical student, then as an internal medicine resident and the last one in 2006 as a fresh new staff cardiologist. In all, I was proud to advertise the importance and rewards of a career in medicine. I spoke of sacrifices as well. However, I will not speak much about medicine. I will speak today about decision making.

Perhaps thanks to my profession's reliance on evidence in making decisions, I have come to respect being deliberative in everything important in life. Ironically though, the one decision that should have been the biggest one for me, was not an informed decision. That is to say that I never did due diligence in researching career prospects when I was in your stage of life. That decision was made by my father when he decided that one of his sons should become a doctor.

If you ever knew me in the 1990's, no one would have thought I had any skill set compatible with a career in medicine. My strengths were in math, physics, chemistry and computers. I had been fascinated by nuclear physics for the longest time that I could remember. Yet, if you ever look at popularly held notions of physicians, it is that they are well versed in life sciences, are good communicators and were good with their hands. I had little interest then in any of these aspects.

Little wonder than that as I went through medical school, I wondered if I should have put more thought into the process. Not that I have much regrets now. What I had not done as a teenager, I rectified as I went through medical school. I participated in observerships, research and electives that gave me exposure to fields I was interested in within medicine. I found where I am at present being the direction I should take after much introspection.

Don't get me wrong. It is not that you would be better off making the most perfect decision at your age. After all, trust me, there is no way you can be exposed to all the facts and opinions you need to do this. It is that you start the hard work of deciding on you career path now. And that you do it systematically and be honest with yourself. Know your skill sets. Based on your school grades and interests alone, you should have a general idea where you should be headed.

So, where do you start? I suggest the starting point has been with you all lifelong. Your parents/guardians. Yes, they can have unrealistic or even downright annoying ideas for you. However, they do have your interests in heart.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS ... CONTD....

If you are ever to get the most honest help in this respect, it will be them. The best part of starting here, is that their advice is free. They expect nothing in return. They wish for your success only. They do so, so that they can gloat to their friends and neighbors.

But please don't stop there. I don't have to tell you this. Much has passed since they were teenagers. In their time, cell phones were called hand phones and were the size of their arms. You have technology on your side in a way they never had, so use it. This would be productive use of the internet. Use Facebook and other social media to make connections and find out what opportunities await. Take up volunteer work and co-op opportunities to experience that field you wonder about. Not only do you get to research your career options this way, you can make valuable connections and references for later on. When you do this, be honest. Do not only focus on the rewards of a profession i.e. salary and perks. Be sure to find out what the negatives are. Ask about the work load and resulting job life imbalance. Ask what bad days look like. Trust me, there is no perfect job. Even professional athletes and porn stars can have stressful days. Even they can be left thinking if they made the right career choice.

This is your most important due diligence. What is due diligence? You will learn that is what corporations undertake during potential dealings to investigate what the other party has been up to. Mostly they examine the finances. But there is more. Good due diligence involves some dirty work. You will find your potential employers/professional school registrars will go beyond the references that you provide when they do due diligence on you. Why should they limit their better judgement to the facts and opinions that you present to them? The strongest institutions will go well beyond that and investigate potential recruits by contacting people close to you without your knowledge and approval. Turn the table, you do due diligence on your career prospects. Be sure to speak to as many who have walked the walk before you. Gain as much info as you can on prospects especially from insiders.

When you have narrowed the list down, it is time to prepare for your chosen career. This means both excelling in your chosen field in university as well as the practical aspects. It's true, practice makes perfect. Do the volunteer work, the apprenticeship, whatever gets you starting to work like an executive, lawyer, and scientist, whatever it is that you feel you are destined to be. Be brave and stick your neck out. Go out of your comfort zone and take risks with new opportunities that allow you to experience more in your field you desire. You will be uncomfortable, may even fail, others may pass judgement but persevere if you desire it enough.

The secret to success is a combination of hard work and failure. There are no successful people that I know who are lazy. You will meet people who appear not to work hard and yet do well in school. Trust me, those people are working hard when they are out of your sight. These are the university students who don't come to class but study their ass off at home. Again, also do not let failure at any task let you down. You really only lose out if you did not learn from the failure. Whatever it is, be introspective and true to yourself. Ask yourself why you did not do well in that exam or get a good evaluation from a supervisor. Go over the wrong answers and speak to that supervisor. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Believe me, repeating this over and over again, is how we near perfection. It is the supremely self-confident people who refuse to believe they can be wrong who fail to correct their mistakes who set themselves up for failure in the things that count.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS ... CONTD....

Even the so call "gifted" athletes do this. They work hard. Cristiano Ronaldo and Leo Messi do this. It is a misnomer to call these successful people "gifted". I can tell you firsthand about that. I went to a supposedly "gifted" school. Yet, looking back, I realize that none of us were special in that school. So, some practiced the tests again and again to do well in them to get into the gifted program. Once in the program, some of them relaxed. They became lazy, did not do their assignments, and did not study hard for exams. One of my friends in that school in grade 8 and early high school years was the son of a Sony executive. He had it all. His lunch box was larger than his school bag. He had the attitude that having been spoon fed all his life, there was no need for hard work. He volunteered for nothing, would hand in assignments very late. One day many years later, I had come back from medical school for the weekend. I caught a late night movie with a friend. We decided to buy pizza there afterwards. Guess who was serving me. The very same son of a Sony executive. It floored me. Here's a kid who had it all. Rich parents who pampered him in all walks of life. They housed, fed and put him in a good school. Then, there he was serving me pizza at the movie theater. He had no university degree or any other reasonable prospects for a person from such a wealthy background. On the other hand, those who did do very well from that school were the hardest working.

University too is a place where only those who have the drive to work hard, thrive and survive. Excelling in exams is about practice. It is about doing every single problem in every single text book that your professor has recommended. Assignments are for your benefit. Remember, those who fail to understand the material and instead decide to copy off friends are only cheating themselves. This is clichéd, I know it and you know it, but its simple math. They will weigh assignments that you hand in to be marked at 20% of the total course. Exams the rest 80%. You can chose to copy off and get the 20% but fail the rest 80% if you truly don't grasp the course material. Or, you can invest in the hard work to excel in that 20% which will then help you master the exams. That's how the brain works. Trust me. Many a study has been done on this. You can give a 1 hour lecture and students will take away 30% of that lecture 15 minutes after the lecture. Two weeks later, they might remember just 10%. And that's presuming the students were paying attention. However, when you supplement the lecture with problem sets, 3 times as much is remembered. So do the work yourselves. There is no alternative to preparation and studying.

I have known many a friend during my university days who having played the fool and procrastinated until the last days of the exams and panicked as they realized they had no time left to study. Some believe it or not had resorted to praying to God, Sai Baba and what have you to make up for it. Yes, one guy even proudly told me that his Baba won't let him down. This was a close friend of mine. I scolded him. Are you crazy? Well, Baba flunked him. Not only did he flunk, I recall how he scored 59%, just 1 agonizing % shy of the passing mark of 60% for that exam. That does not mean you have to study alone. Form groups that you trust to bounce problems off. But in the end, you must go through the exercise of doing the problems and questions. You will find many a distraction. There will be plenty of girls to distract the boys and vice versa. There will be plenty of gossip. If you study in your bedroom, it would be too easy to lie down in bed and go to sleep. So, find your place where you can concentrate and not have distractions. Also, the best defense against the scourge of procrastination is a timetable. Yes, budget your time for each exam. Know yourself and adjust accordingly. Build the discipline to study well ahead of the exam to avoid the last minute crunch. The final hours to the exam should be strictly for review only. You must have mastered the material well before.

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So who knows what you have in mind for yourselves now. It may well change as you go through school and university. That's ok. Just be true to yourself and find a career path where you can feel comfortable working hard. Again, in the past, I have advocated for people to seek careers in medicine as it is rewarding work. As such, usually I would meet young people who were interested in that career path in such events. There was one event though that I remember very clearly due to an unexpected twist. I was asked to hand out awards at the Tamil Cultural and Academic Society of Durham in summer 2009.

There, a father of one of the young student award winners wanted to introduce me to his son about 17 years old or so. I expected another medicine enthusiast. So, I asked him the usual "what do you want to do in university?" I was quite taken aback when he replied Law School. Law school I thought? You see, us in the medical profession [especially cardiologists] have an innate fear of lawyers. We ourselves almost have a heart attack when we see a lawyer's letterhead in our mail. The lawyers know this too. That is why when they need to speak to us over the phone, they right away say "Don't worry, we are not suing you…" Anyway, so I asked the young man why he wanted to become a lawyer. He said he saw a need in our community for good advocates and especially political leadership. Remember, this was 2009, we had all gone through the trauma of the end of the war back home. He explained to me why our community in Canada had to share a collective guilt in the loss of life of innocents in that tragedy. In his young mind, if our fractured organizations here had worked together to elect federal representatives, then we would not have had to rely on fickle politicians outside of the community to advocate for the innocents trapped in the so called cease-fire zones. He saw that the petty politics of people in our generation and the generation ahead of ours had resulted in organizations without any democratic mandate pretending to speak on behalf of the community in general. The mainstream politicians knew this. They knew that these people would not be able organize to help them out in their times of need i.e. elections and hence they collectively bamboozled our community. He outlined a very ambitious agenda where the students of his generation would become politically active. They would learn the skills of politics and gain experience in the various political parties. Then, they would form organizations that would represent every Tamil in Canada. From these, a unified leadership would then advocate for the community and its interests back home.

Ambitious, yes. I challenged him that people of my generation have worked hard for the cause. And that politics is messy and difficult. Consensus building on issues like this are tough. But he had done his research. He knew his history well. At least for a 17 year old. He spoke of the history of the Jews in the west. How, they had arrived much like us but in the 1900s. They fled persecution far worse. Yet they educated their young. Formed strong bonds within the community and diversified their professional class. Strong lawyers and others in the community worked hard in the political arena to advance the interests of the community both at home and abroad. He made the case that we can do more than that. After all, when it comes to education, we have the most persistent parents. The tuition industry speaks to this. He then went on to say that a career in law would provide him the skills necessary to advocate for the community. He wanted to learn how to make a case and to rally people to a cause. I thought to myself that he is more than ½ way there. This young man is going to persevere until he becomes a lawyer. He is not going to stop there. He will enter politics and will persevere into public service. Of that, I have no doubt.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS ... CONTD....

So, I don't want all of you to become lawyers. Then, my malpractice insurance fees are going to shoot through the roof! But I do want you all to work hard and succeed in your chosen careers. Like that guy, you must think beyond the middle rungs and on to leadership.

You should not only work hard, you should also take the time to relax and enjoy your lives. There is lots of time for both. We all strive for the perfect work life balance, but you will all find it.

For the parents, I want to say this. Give your children a lot of credit. You may not know it, but they are probably already carrying more of a workload and stress then you have had at their age. In your time, work was done at a much slower pace and multitasking was unheard of. Yes, the advancement in technology does mean many of the tasks that you painfully carried out can be done easier now. However, there are much more of those tasks for these youngsters to do. Trust me, it can get quite overwhelming. In high school, but more so in university. Then in the work place, they will have to deal with responsibility, politics and mind games that leadership tends to play. Then there is the financial burden of education. Your generation had it very easy. Schooling was extremely cheap. It got pretty expensive towards my last years in university but nothing like what it is now. Most will graduate with a sizeable debt. On top of that, the fiscal crises affecting most levels of government now mean there won't be much relief of these financial burdens. Still on top of that, the politicians still cater to your generation because you have the numbers and the time to go to the polls to vote. The youth don't. Every time my hospital puts a $10,000 internal cardioverter defibrillator device in patients above age 75, I cringe. Believe it or not, I feel it is better spent on education in someone who has their entire life ahead of them. The unfair politics of social medicine dictate that we should spend 10 times more on the final years of life after age 75 than in education or even healthcare for sick children.

Life is not fair. Yes. But you can change it. Make a plan, work hard, succeed and then go on to lead. You can then be in a position to change this unfairness.

Thank you very much.

QUOTATIONS

If we open a quarrel between the past and the present,
we shall find that we have lost the future.

\- Sir Winston Churchill

Imagination is more important than knowledge.

\- Albert Einstein

Everything has its beauty but not everyone sees it.

\- Confucius

PHOTOSYNTHESIS - THE MOST PROFOUND BIOLOGICAL PROCESS ON PLANET EARTH

By Kanagasabai Theivendirarajah, PhD (London)



You may wonder how come a simple process that occurs in green coloured plants can be so deep and profound. Yes, this process of photosynthesis is the prime mover of energy to all living organisms including the most advanced creature on earth, the man. The energy needed to drive all biological reactions which is by the way the life that we know of, is provided by photosynthesis. The major components or players in this dramatic process are the green coloured molecule chlorophyll, water (H2O) and carbon-dioxide (CO2). Chlorophyll molecule has the unique property of absorbing the light from the sun and use the light energy to break down the water molecule releasing the hydrogen atom and oxygen gas (O2). The hydrogen atom with its reducing power is utilized fully in the photosynthetic process through a series of enzyme mediated reactions by the famous Calvin cycle to fix the CO2 gas to produce sugars. Sugars are the primary source of energy for the formation of all others energy sources like proteins fats etc. in all life forms. We are no exception to this rule; we directly or indirectly depend on the outcome of this magnificent biological process. Our life solely rely on the energy of the sunlight, the transformation of the light energy into chemical energy which ultimately drives all activities is mediated by the wonder molecule chlorophyll.

One of the bi-products of photosynthesis is oxygen. This is the oxygen that is used by all organisms except for a few anaerobic organisms to breath or respire to break down the sugars we consume to generate energy. Without the oxygen on this planet, living forms including man could not survive for long. In other words humanity must understand that the provider of energy for all living forms is the sun, no sun equals no life on this planet. Also if chlorophyll molecule was not formed whether by accident or not in the primordial soup, living forms could not have evolved into the present state. It is also true that if there are no green plants (chlorophyll) there will be no life. It is for this reason that we must always protect our plants and all other organisms on this planet otherwise we shall all slowly perish. The energy source i.e. the light from the sun is immense; all life forms utilize only a wee bit of this energy. We will not run out of this energy, it may last for millions or billions of years to come. However we can run out of chlorophyll molecule, when we destroy the forests, burn down grasslands, pollute water bodies and the environment in general we reduce the amount of chlorophyll molecule on this planet.

Chlorophyll is a porpyrin molecule, probably formed about 3 billion years ago. You would be surprised to know that the key molecule, hemoglobin involved in the transport of oxygen through the blood stream in man and other warm blooded organisms is a cousin of chlorophyll. Hemoglobin is also a porpyrin molecule with iron (Fe) atom in the center unlike the chlorophyll that has magnesium (Mg) atom in the center. One can easily see the common thread among all life forms. Another cousin of chlorophyll and hemoglobin is cyanocobalamin or B12 vitamin. This molecule has cobalt (Co) atom in the center.

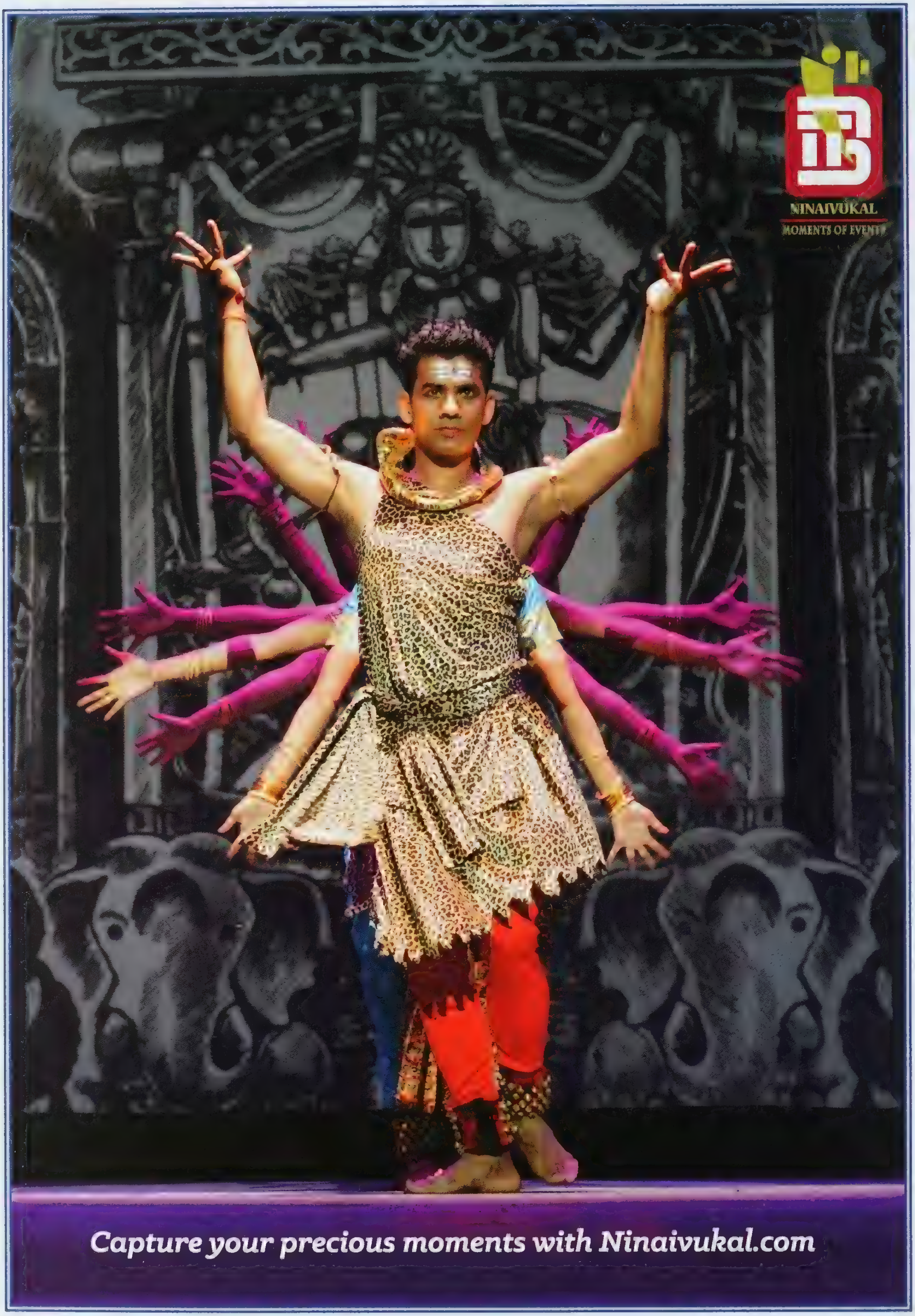
About that time of formation of porpyrin or little earlier another unique molecule DNA was formed on this planet. DNA as you all know has the unique property of self-replication. With the advent of DNA molecule on this planet, cells began to divide or multiply exact copies and that led to what we know now as reproduction.

PHOTOSYNTHESIS.... CONTD....

Reproduction is again the key to all life; no reproduction means there is no continuity of life. In the absence of reproduction the species will automatically grind to a halt on this planet. In any species whether a microscopic micro-organism, a bacterium or the most advanced species Homo sapiens sapiens, the human being, the wonder molecule DNA directs and operate the plan, of what type of physical and functional character the species should be. Unlike an architect's design of sketches and drawings, in biological plan the information for all structural and biological activities is stored and marked through genes. Genes by the way are DNA of highly specific sequences which ultimately determines the character of the species. I do not want to delve into the details, but one should understand that the design has a common thread of deciphering the genetic messages in all forms of life...

Man has been in the moon but could not find any forms of life and the possibility of establishing life on this satellite of earth was so slim, hence he had dropped the idea of colonizing moon, at least for time being. Now there is a greater interest on the red planet Mars. Probes were sent to Mars to study the Martian atmosphere and the Mars surface. There are plans to send men to Mars to explore the feasibility of establishing some form of life. Who knows one day man may create a micro environment suitable to sustain life by transporting the photosynthetic apparatus either synthetic or live on planet Mars. There is no scarcity for sun light (energy source) on Mars and if they can generate some water and CO_2, the magical process of producing sugars and oxygen can be ignited. It is not fiction but one day man may start a new cycle of Darwinian evolution on the planet Mars.

For all life on this planet, the sun and its bright light is supreme and all mighty. Sun is not eternal, formed about4.5 billion years ago and may disappear. This tragedy is definitely not going to happen for billions of years to come. Sun light provides the energy for the survival and continuity of all life on earth. The same light shines in all the trillions of stars on the universe and there is always a possibility that some form of life may exist in some planets of some stars. Life is beautiful and magnificent; this beautiful entity in all forms is to be loved, cared and protected at all times.


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GLIMPSE OF PAN AM PARAPAN AM GAMES

By: Raveena Rajasingham, BA.Sc, MHS, PhD(c)
Cardiology Clinical Specialist / Consultant, Canada
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Pan American Games also referred as the Pan Am Games constitute a major event in the Americas featuring summer and formerly winter sports, in which thousands of athletes participate in a variety of competitions. The competition is held between athletes from countries of the Americas, every four years in the year before the Summer Olympic Games. The first Pan American Games were held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1951 and the inaugural Parapan American Games were held in Mexico City in 1999.

Toronto is the proud city to host Pan Am and Parapan Am games in July of this year. This is Ontario's first international multi-sport event since 1930 of British Empire Games. One of world popular city will welcome 10, 000 plus athletes, coaches and officials from across Latin America, South America, the Caribbean and North America. Athletes spent years of intense training, perseverance and sacrifice to the test in world-class competition in 36 Pan Am Sports and 15 Parapan Am sports. The TORONTO 2015 (TOR2015) games will involve municipalities stretching from Oshawa to Welland. Games of this magnitude cannot be accomplished without the help of volunteers. More than 20,000 volunteers will help deliver the best Pan Am Parapan Am Games ever. The Pan Am games takes place July 10-26 and Parapan Am games from August 7-15 with 51 sports 41 nations and territories.

Planning and delivering of the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Parapan Am Games needs the support of volunteers. This is one of the largest calls for volunteering in the history of Ontario. Volunteers will contribute to all aspects of operations for the games. Being part of TOR2015 will be once in a lifetime experience and opportunity to celebrate our diversity. Enhancement program is available for college and university students who volunteer at the games. New graduates who volunteer will be able to defer paying their OSAP loan until one full year after completing full-time studies. In addition new and returning students who volunteer will not be required to make a pre-study financial contribution. High School students who volunteer, their hours will be counted as High School's 40 hour community involvement.

PACHI is the official mascot of Pan AM Parapan Am Games. Pachi has 41 brightly colored quills, one for each of the Pan American countries participating in the Games. His quills are five brilliant colors and represent qualities that he holds. Green is youth, fuchsia is passion, and blue is collaboration, orange is determination and purple is creativity. Pachi's dream is for everyone to celebrate their differences and be proud of their individuality, like him.

I am honored to be selected for the Pan Am Games Host committee for Ajax. It has been a wonderful experience being involved in many activities and planning towards the Baseball and Softball games which will take place in Ajax in July. Ajax will have the third largest audience during the Pan Am Parapan Am games. I am also extremely happy to be chosen to take part in the opening ceremony show. It's once in a life time opportunity that will be cherished forever!!
Ontario is ready and waiting to receive our friends from Americas and showcase our beautiful city, people and show diversity is our strength. For more information visit http://www.toronto2015.org.


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WHY SHOULD ONE CHOOSE AN ACCOUNTING CAREER?

By: Ms. Soundari Vigneshwaran, CPA, CMA

Business Analyst, Financial Policy and Business Division,

Ontario Ministry of Education



Many people find choosing a career path quite challenging. Many students who aspire to follow a certain profession often change their minds either during their schooling period or after graduation.

As for myself, I had always planned to pursue a career in the sciences as a student. In university, I graduated with a degree in Mathematical Sciences and Statistics hoping to someday become an Actuary. As we were required to select electives outside our core studies, my interest was drawn more towards language courses and chose only a couple of credits in business related fields. At that time, this selection was justified given the prestigious positions one will expect to choose from in the science field.

However, getting into the workforce after graduation seemed to be much tougher than I anticipated. We were in the midst of a recession in the mid-90s and very few opportunities existed for new graduates. Securing a position in the science sector such as at Statistics Canada for example, seemed almost impossible and very competitive.

Despite my background in Mathematics, most available positions that attracted my interest and required my skillset were in the financial sector. One position led to another, eventually making me to pursue and successfully complete a professional accounting designation.

Through my experience, I have realized that there are several benefits to choosing a career in accounting. Qualified accountants can expect a good salary, a challenging job, various job titles, a variety of responsibilities, and have transferable skills that can make them find work in almost every industry. Many people have the impression that accountants are thin, nerdy type individuals. However, accountants work in a number of industries, and serve functions that range from detective work, to ensuring organizations can meet their budgets and payrolls. Examples of the different sectors that accountants may find employment include: manufacturing, financial institutions, government agencies, health care, and in public accounting. This has given the accounting profession high demand. Not only can accountants find employment within the jurisdiction they get their certification, but are easily employable in other jurisdictions, provinces and countries. In comparison to careers with equivalent levels of pay and prestige, the path of a career as an accountant is relatively short. Other professions such as medicine, law, teaching, etc. have rigid entry requirements someone who is new to the country.

It is possible to become an accountant with a wide selection of undergraduate degrees. Some of the important skills required for accounting jobs are to be detail oriented, to be good with numbers, to enjoy math, have a tendency to double check work, and be analytical in solving problems. Computer skills and proficiency with excel works and accounting software has also emerged as being vital.

WHY SHOULD ONE CHOOSE AN ACCOUNTING CAREER... CONTD....

Accounting Career Paths: Private vs Public

Accountants have the option between working in the public or private sectors. Hiring is selective at both types of accounting environments. The choice between public and private accounting and the decision to move from one area to another is an important one that has to be carefully considered. One sector may be better suited than the other for different personality types. Public accounting jobs often require people to work in audit firms as auditors. This involves long work hours, frequent travel and a lot of variety. Public accountants need to have the ability to work in an ever-changing environment with the ability to learn and adapt quickly.

The career path for a public accountant is fairly straight forward, typically starting off in an entry level position as a staff accountant. Years of experience will likely advance one to a role as a senior accountant, followed by a managerial position and ultimately becoming a firm partner.

Private accounting jobs are also often called corporate, financial or management accountings jobs and tend to have a more consistent work schedule with less travel and a much better work-life balance. This type of accountants can be found working mostly in corporations, governments and as independent self-employed accountants. Private accountants also start their careers in entry level accounting positions and move up into managerial roles over the years. In the private sector, the chief financial officer is usually the top most level of the career ladder followed by the director of finance. Public accounting salaries are typically higher than private accounting salaries, although both fields are well compensated. However, advancing into a role of chief financial officer is very challenging then becoming a partner in an audit firm and only a very small percentage of people get that opportunity.

Types of Accounting Careers

The role of an accountant is to provide financial data that is required to assess the present and future economic activities of individuals, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and governmental bodies. The preparation of financial statements and recording business transactions are the core functions of a general accountant. However, there are quite simply tens if not hundreds of specialist areas one can pursue, such as auditing, management accounting, information systems, taxation, accounting policy, financial reporting, computer operations, etc.

Here are brief outlines of a few:
Audit: Audit is a core accounting function and involves checking and verifying accounting general ledgers and balances of organizations. Most individuals that specialize in this area often find themselves working at audit firms.
Management Accounting: This part of accounting involves preparing financial reports for presentation to senior management. The purpose of this is for managers to get a depth understanding of areas within the organization and how well they are doing financially.
Taxation: Tax accountants prepare corporate and personal income tax statements. They are also responsible for preparing strategies for reducing and deferring taxes, reporting taxes and how to approach a merger or acquisition.
Financial Reporting: Financial analysts and accountants extract data from ledgers, reconcile numbers and prepare financial statements. They also play a major part in the organization's important financial decisions such as: mergers and acquisitions, employee benefits planning and cash projections.

So, for those considering becoming accountants, pursuing a professional accounting designation such as the Chartered Professional Accountants' designation in Canada provides the ability to choose an exciting career path towards the industry of your choice, anywhere in the world. ★

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

Transition from high school to first year university is a big leap for many students. Students take at least a term to overcome the culture shift. The major challenge for new university students is the self-directed learning environment. Students are often overwhelmed by the amount of workload they have per week and many struggle with time management skills to thrive in a university environment. Moreover, the students who live on campus feel additional financial and emotional stress on top of the academic challenges.

In order to smoothen the transition from high school to university, most Ontario universities offer co-curricular programs that are designed on the basis of holistic approach to education. The philosophy of this approach is built on the basis of humanitarian values such as compassion and peace to help students to find meaningful connections with campus community to engage in learning and transform their self-identity. These programs navigate student academic and personal life through workshops and seminars.

Research and student experiences inform that students who are part of the learning communities on campus are often more likely to master the essential survival skills to keep their academic and personal life in good balance. Learning communities on campus help students to connect with mentors, staff and faculty to gain insights about campus life and their program of study. Students who are engaged in these communities are open to new people and new experiences, which give them a new skill set to improve their academic performance and boost their self-confidence.

This article provides an overview of university learning communities and programs such as work-study, service learning, facilitated study groups and student activities that can help first year students to thrive in a university environment.

Learning Communities

Orientation day is a good start for new students to join the learning communities on campus to learn more about the services and resources that are available to support their academic and social life. Academic advising and career centre on campus is the best place for students to begin their academic journey as it provides many resources to facilitate student learning.

There are many initiatives that students can take to improve their learning skills. The first step is understanding their learning styles. Generally learners can be categorized in to three main categories. Auditory leaners, visual learners and kinesthetic learners. Auditory learners prefer to listen to verbal instructions and they learn well from lectures, seminars and discussions. Visual learners prefer to read and observe and they learn the best from visual aids such as pictures, graphs, videos etc. Kinesthetic learners like hands on resources to learn. They learn from real life experiences such as performing an experiment or building models to interpret information. Seminars and workshops provided by campus academic advising centre helps students to understand their learning styles to develop effective learning strategies.

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION.... CONTD....

Class Room Learning Communities

Students often feel their university classes as a professor lead, content driven community and therefore feel disconnected from learning. In order to enhance student engagement, many professors are now moving towards taking a learning community approach to their class rooms, where student learning is facilitated rather than directed by the professors. In this approach, professors include students in creating learning activities.Group projects are one of the most common tools used by many professors to create a class room learning community. In these assignments, the instructor sets out clear common goals. The students are assigned in to groups to take responsibility in educating each other on the subject matter. The final product of this assignment is either a research paper or a group presentation. These class room learning communities help students to develop problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, presentation skills and interpersonal skills.

Facilitated Study Groups

Facilitated study groups are discipline specific or course specific learning communities that help students to learn from student mentors. The student mentors are in close communication with course instructors to facilitate student learning outside the class rooms. In addition to helping students to succeed academically, these programs also allow students to connect socially with other students, who are from the same programs to share valuable experience. Some higher education institutions also have residence facilitated study groups. These groups have experienced residence coaches who help students to successfully navigate their academic and personal life.

Work-Study Programs

Internal and external work-study programs are another opportunity for students to have a close interaction with faculty members to gain a deep sense of their discipline. Internal work-study programs includes positions such as research and teaching assistantships.

These academic placements allow students to collaborate with faculty and graduate students to conduct research and construct knowledge. This experience enhances their independent learning skills and critical thinking skills. Many students who take advantage of the internal work-study programs gain valuable insight in to graduate research, which helps them to make future academic plans.

External work-study programs generally have work terms embedded within students' academic year. The students are placed in industry settings as interns, where they gain hands on experience in the work field. This helps students to directly apply their knowledge in solving real life problems. These meaningful and stimulating environments ignite students' passion for deep class room learning.

Service Learning Programs

Students who are part of service learning programs take advantage of valuable training and feedback from faculty. Service learning positions include, educational research assistant, mentor and learning facilitator. These programs help students to transform as individuals who are more open to new people and new ideas.

PREPARING FOR THE TRANSITION.... CONTD....

Student Clubs

Student clubs foster leadership skills and complement the class room experience to build strong campus learning communities. Generally there is a broad spectrum of cultural, academic, social and political clubs. These clubs provide a forum for students to explore their career interests by interacting with many professional organizations.

Summary

In summary, students should anticipate and prepare for the challenges that come with transition from high school to university. Taking the initiative to learn about all the services and resources that are available at their postsecondary institution can smoothen the transition. Joining student clubs, extra-curricular activities and volunteer work can help students to make new friends and alleviate stress.

Undergraduate education is a once in a life time experience, students should try to make the most of it by being prepared to face the challenges that come with transition! The outcome will be well worth all their efforts!



YOUR PHONE IS YOUR WALLET

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The invention of the credit card in the 1950s revolutionized how people paid for merchandise. No longer did you have to carry cash with you at all times. You were able to borrow money to buy expensive items and pay it later. Sixty years later it's hard to find a merchant from Nunavut to Timbuktu who doesn't accept Visa or MasterCard. What credit cards did to cash is what mobile payments will do to credit cards. The next big revolution in payments is upon us.

The mobile payments business model works on the premise that everyone carries their smartphone everywhere they go. Why not turn your phone into your wallet? Whether shopping at Costco, Shoppers Drugmart or Starbucks, instead of swiping your credit card to pay, you tap your phone on a point of sale (POS) payment device at the checkout counter.

One of the technologies used to enable this is Near Field Communication (NFC). Smart phones and devices enabled with NFC communicate wirelessly in radio frequencies by touching them together or bringing them into proximity, typically a distance of 10 cm or less. You setup your smart phone (once) with your bank or credit card company. An unique identifier that represents your account number is stored inside a secure chip on your phone. The POS payment device will tell your phone that it requires $50 to complete the transaction. Your phone will generate a unique code for that transaction. That code combined with the unique identifier stored inside the secure chip is sent to your credit agency/bank and the merchant's financial institution. The financial instructions then exchange the funds from your account to the merchant's account.

The companies that have made a head start in this business are the heavy weights of Silicon Valley. Apple has a service called "Apple Pay" and Google has the "Google Wallet." While this market is still at its infancy, the growth opportunities are vast and immense that Microsoft has also joined the party. They recently announced in April that they have been building a mobile payments solution since 2012. Samsung, one not to be left behind, has recently acquired LoopPay, a mobile payments firm that has signed up over 10 million merchants in the US.

What makes this technology better than credit cards? For one, the consumer doesn't have to carry cash or credit cards; they simply use the phone that they always carry. Not having to carry cash or credit cards is extremely convenient. Second, a smart phone is more secure (Apple phones use your fingerprints) than credit cards thus reducing the chances of theft. Thieves who steal your wallet can use your credit cards easily. However, smart phones can be locked so that thieves can't turn them on. Lastly, the fees that merchants have to pay credit card agencies will be reduced due to mobile payment systems reducing the cost and overhead of middlemen brokering transactions. For a company like Starbucks that has $13 billion in annual revenue, a reduction in credit card fees of 0.25% is a savings of $33 million a year.

YOUR PHONE IS YOUR WALLET.... CONTD....

Early numbers reveal that approximately \$50 billion in sales have been processed through mobile payments technologies in the US in 2014: a fraction compared to \$3 trillion in purchases processed through the three largest credit card agencies: Visa, MasterCard and American Express. However, the future for mobile payments looks extremely promising due to the staggering growth of smart-phones. The complete dominance of smartphones across the globe combined with the ease of use of mobile payments technology will result in massive growth.

Twenty years from now parents will be telling their kids stories about the 'good old days' when a rectangular plastic card that they kept in their wallets is what they used to purchase milk and bread at the grocery store.

To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advance in science.

- Albert Einstein

Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious.

- Stephen Hawking

புலம் பெயர்ந்த நாடுகளில் தமிழ்மொழியின் எதிர்காலம்

கலாநிதி. எஸ். சிவநாயகமூர்த்தி, முன்னாள் பிரதிக் கல்விப் பணிப்பாளர்



உலகின் மூத்த மொழிகளிலொன்றான நம் தாய்மொழியாம் தமிழ் மொழி பற்றித் தமிழராகிய நாம் பெருமைப்படுவதோடு எதிர்காலத்திலும் புலம் பெயர்ந்த நாடுகளில் வாழும் தமிழர்கள் தம் தாய்மொழியாம் தமிழை தம் தாய்மொழியாக கற்பதும் அதன் விழுமியங்களையும் கலாச்சாரப் பண்புகளையும் பேணிக் காப்பதும் அவசியமாகும். இன்று தமிழ்மொழி பேசும் உலகில் சரியான உச்சரிப்புக்களுடன் கலப்பின்றித் தமிழ் பேசுபவர்கள் இலங்கைத் தமிழர்களே யென்றால் அது மிகையாகாது. மொழி அழிந்தால் இனம் அழிவதோடு அதன் கலாச்சாரப் பண்புகளும் படிப்படியாக மறைந்துபோகும் என்பதற்கு மொறிசியஸ், பீசித்தீவு போன்ற நாடுகளில் புலம் பெயர்ந்து வாழ்ந்த மக்களின் வாழ்க்கை வரலாறுகளே சான்றாகவுள்ளன.

"யாமறிந்த மொழிகளிலே தமிழ் மொழி போல் இனிதாவது எங்குங்காணோம்,
பாமரராய் விலங்குகளாய் உலகனைத்தும் இகழ்ச்சி சொலப் பான்மை கெட்டு
நாமம் அது தமிழரெனக் கொண்டிங்கு வாழ்ந்திடுதல் நன்றோ சொல்லீர்.
தே மதுரத் தமிழோசை உலகமெலாம் பரவும் வகை செய்தல் வேண்டும்"

என்று மகா கவி பாரதி பாடினான்.

இன்று உலகிலுள்ள பலநாடுகளில் தமிழர்கள் புலம் பெயர்ந்து வாழ்கின்றார்கள். உலகிலுள்ள ஏழுகோடிக்கு மேற்பட்ட தமிழர்களின் தாய் மொழி தமிழ் மொழியேயாகும். ஆனால் தமிழ் பேசும் மக்களின் தொகையும், தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்பவர்களின் தொகையும் குறைந்து கொண்டே போகின்றது. தமிழர்கள் பெரும்பான்மையாக வாழும் தமிழ் நாட்டிலேயே தனித்தமிழ் பேசுவோரின் தொகையும் அருகிக் கொண்டேவருகிறது. வேறு மொழிகளைப் பேசுவதோ அன்றேல் வேறு மொழிகளுடன் கலந்தோ தமிழைப் பேசுவதை ஒரு நாகரீகமாகக் கருதும் நிலையும் மக்களிடம் அங்கு அதிகமாகக் காணப்படுவதைக் காண்கிறோம். மேற்கத்திய நாடுகளில் புலம் பெயர்ந்து வாழும் மக்களில் பலர் அந்நாடுகளில் தமது பிள்ளைகள் தமிழைக் கற்கத் தேவையில்லையென்ற மனப்பான்மை கொண்டே வாழுகின்றனர். கனடாவைப் பொறுத்தவரையில் மூன்றரை லட்சம் தமிழர்கள் வாழுகின்றார்கள் எனக் கூறப்படுகின்றது. இவர்களில் இரண்டு லட்சத்துக்கு மேற்பட்டவர்கள் இலங்கையிலேயே பிறந்து தாய் மொழியைப் பேசுபவர்களாகவும், தாய் மொழியைக் கற்றவர்களாகவுமுள்ளனர். இவர்கள் தங்களின் கனடாவில் பிறந்த குழந்தைகளுக்குத் தமிழ் மொழியை வீட்டு மொழியாகக் கற்பித்து வந்தாலே எங்கள் குழந்தைகள் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்கக் கூடியவர்களாக ஆகவிடுவார்கள். அது மட்டுமல்லாமல் கனடாவில் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்பதற்கான வசதிகளை அரசாங்கமே செய்து கொடுத்துள்ளது.

பல பாடசாலைகளில் பிள்ளைகள் தமிழ் மொழியை இலவசமாகக் கற்கக் கூடிய வாய்ப்புக்களுள்ளன. இவற்றை விடத் தமிழைக் கற்பிக்கின்ற பல அமைப்புக்களும், தனிப்பட்ட ஆசிரியர்கள் பலரும் கனடாவில் உள்ளார்கள். ஆனால் தமிழைக் கற்பிக்க வேண்டுமென்ற ஆர்வம் பெற்றோரிடம் குறைந்தே காணப்படுகின்றது. கனடாவில் ஏனைய கலைப் பாடங்களுக்கோ, கறாட்டி, உடற் பயற்சி, நீந்துதல் போன்ற பாடங்களுக்குப் பிள்ளைகளை ஊக்கப்படுத்தும் அளவிற்குப் பெற்றோர் தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழை தம்பிள்ளைகள் கற்பது அவசியம் என்ற சிந்தனையுடன் அவர்களைத் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்கச் செய்வதில் அதிக ஊக்கம் காட்டுவதாகவில்லை. ஒரு குறைந்த வீதமான பெற்றோரே தங்கள் பிள்ளைகளுக்குத் தம் தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழ்மொழியைக் கற்க வேண்டுமென்ற ஆர்வமுடையவர்களாக உள்ளனர் என்பதைத் தமிழ் கற்கும் மாணவர்களின் தொகைகளிலிருந்து அறியமுடிகிறது. இந்த நிலை நீடித்தால் காலப்போக்கில் தமிழ் மொழிகற்போரின் தொகை நலிவடைந்து போவதோடு எம்தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழ் மொழி புலம் பெயர்ந்த நாடுகளில் மறைந்து போகக் கூடிய நிலைமையும் ஏற்படலாம். இந்த நிலையைப் பெற்றோரும் தமிழ் ஆர்வலர்களும், தமிழறிஞர்களும் உணர்ந்து செயற்பட்டாலே எதிர்காலத்தில் தமிழ் மொழி புலம் பெயர்ந்த நாடுகளிலும் நிலைத்து நீடு வாழ வழி பிறக்கும். நாம் தாயகத்தில் வாழ்ந்த காலங்களில் எம் மக்கள் தமிழ் மொழிக்காக எத்தனை தியாகங்களைச் செய்தார்கள். மோட்டார் வாகனங்களில் கூட தமிழ் ஸ்ரீயைப் போட வேண்டுமென்பதற்காக எத்தனை போராட்டங்கள், எத்தனை சத்தியாக்கிரகங்கள் இடம் பெற்றன.


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தமிழ்மொழியின் எதிர்காலம்.... தொடர்ச்சி....

புலம் பெயர்ந்து வேறு நாடுகளுக்கு வந்தவுடன் எம்தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழை மறந்து விடலாமா? இதனால் நம் பிள்ளைகள் என்ன பலனைப் பெறப்போகிறார்கள். கனடாவைப் பொறுத்தவரையில் ஆங்கிலத்தையோ அன்றேல் "பிறெஞ்" மொழியையோ மாணவர்கள் கற்க வேண்டியது அவசியமாகும். அவையே இந்நாட்டின் கல்வி மொழியாகும். ஆனால் நம்தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழை இரண்டாவது மொழியாகப் படிப்பதனால் மாணவர்கள் எவ்வளவோ நன்மைகளைப் பெறக் கூடியவர் களாவர். தொழிலுக்காக மட்டும் எம் தாய்மொழியாம் தமிழைப் படிப்பதென்றில்லை. தமிழைப் படிப்பதன் மூலம் சில தொழில் வாய்ப்புக்களைப் பெறலாமெனினும் கனடியத் தேசிய மொழிகளைப் படிப்பதனாலே இந்நாட்டில் பல வேலைகளைப் பெறக்கூடிய வாய்ப்புக்கள் உள்ளன. இன்று உலகிலே பலர் ஒன்றுக்கு மேற்பட்ட மொழிகளைக் கற்றுச் சிறப்புடன் வாழ்வதையும் காண்கிறோம். எமது பிள்ளைகள் தமிழை இரண்டாவது மொழியாகப் படிப்பது அவர்களின் உரிமையும் கடமையு மாகும். இதைப் பெற்றோர் உணர்ந்து தம் பிள்ளைகள் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்பதற்கு ஆவன செய்யாவிட்டால் எமது பிள்ளைகள் தம் தாய் மொழியாம் தமிழ் மொழியைப் பேச முடியாதவர்களாகவும், மற்றவர்கள் தமிழ் மொழியில் பேசும் போது அவற்றை விளங்கிக் கொள்ள முடியாதவர்களாகவும், ஊமைத் தமிழர்களாகவும், செவிட்டுத் தமிழர்களாகவுமே விளங்குவர்.

தமிழ் மொழியில் தமிழர்களின் வாழ்வியலை எடுத்தியம்பும் சங்ககால இலக்கியங்களும், மகாபாரதம், கம்பராமாயணம் போன்ற பண்பியலை விளக்கும் இதிகாசங்களும், நாயன்மார்களால் பாடப்பட்ட இறைபக்தியையும், ஆன்மீகத்தையும் வளர்க்கும் தேவார திருவாசகங்களும் நிறையவே உள்ளன. எல்லாவற்றுக்கும் மேலாக உலகப் பொதுமறையாம் திருக்குறள் தமிழ் மொழியிலேயே உள்ளது. இது போன்ற ஒரு நூல் எந்த மொழியிலும் காணமுடியாது. இந்நூல் இன்று ஐம்பதுக்கு மேற்பட்ட மொழிகளில் மொழி பெயர்க்கப்பட்டுள்ளமை தமிழின் பெருமையை உலகோருக்கெல்லாம் உணர்த்தி நிற்கின்றது.

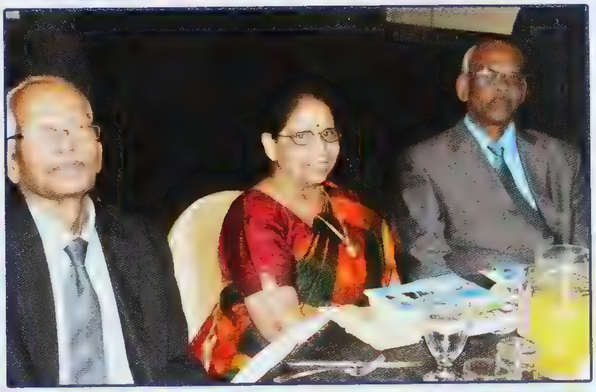
இலங்கையிலும் சரி, தமிழகத்திலும் சரி பல தமிழறிஞர்களும் கல்விமான்களும் தமிழ் மொழியுடன் பல வேற்று மொழிகளையும் சிறப்பாகக் கற்று மேன்மையுடன் வாழ்ந்து வந்துள்ளார்கள். இலங்கையிலே தனிநாயக அடிகள், சுவாமி விபுலானந்தஅடிகள் மற்றும் பல அரசியல் தலைவர்கள் பல மொழிகளைக் கற்று பேரறிஞர்களாகவும், விஞ்ஞானிகளாகவும் திகழ்ந்துள்ளார்கள். கனடாவில் பலபெற்றோர்கள் தங்கள் பிள்ளைகள் தமிழ் படிக்கச் சென்றால் அவர்களது ஆங்கிலமூலம் கற்கும் பாடசாலைக் கல்விக்குப் பாதிப்பு ஏற்படும் என எண்ணுகிறார்கள். இது ஒரு தவறான கருத்து ஆகும். இன்று தமிழ்படிக்கும் பிள்ளைகளில் அனேகர் பாடசாலையில் ஆங்கில மொழிக் கல்வியிலும் சிறந்து விளங்குவதாகப் பாடசாலை ஆசிரியர்களே வியந்து கூறுகிறார்கள். இக்கூற்று உண்மையென்பதைப் பெற்றோர்களேயுணர்ந்துள்ளார்கள். இவ்வாறிருக்கும்போது தமிழ் கற்பதற்கு எந்தத் தடைகளு மில்லை. தங்கள் பிள்ளைகளுக்குத் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்பதற்கு ஆக்கமும் ஊக்கமும் அளிக்காது விடுவது பெற்றோர் தம் வாழ்நாளில் தங்கள் பிள்ளைகளுக்குச் செய்யும் மாபெருந்தவறாகும். "யான் பள்ளிக்குச் செல்லும்காலத்தில் என்னை வழிப்படுத்தி தமிழ்படிக்க ஆவன செய்யவில்லையே என் தந்தையாகிய பாதகனே"யென பிள்ளைகள் வருந்தக் கூடியகாலமும் ஒன்று ஏற்படலாம். ஆகவே பெற்றோராகிய நாம் நமது பிள்ளைகள் சிறுவர்களாகவிருக்கும் போதே வீடுகளில் அவர்களுடன் தமிழிலே பேசி, தமிழிலே கதைகளைக் கூறிப் பாடல்களைப்பாடி அவர்களை மகிழ்வித்து வருவோமாகில் அவர்கள் பாடசாலைகளுக்குச் சென்ற பின்பும் தமிழையும் ஒருபாடமாகக் கற்க ஆர்வமும் ஊக்கமும் உடையவர்களாகத் திகழ்வர் என்பதில் ஐயமில்லை. நாங்கள் வீடுகளிலே ஆங்கிலம் பேச வழிநடத்த வேண்டியதில்லை. அவர்கள் பாடசாலை சென்று ஆரம்பவகுப்புக்களில் படிக்கும் போதே ஆங்கிலத்தைச் சரளமாகப் பேச ஆரம்பித்து விடுகிறார்கள். அவர்கள் பேசும் ஆங்கிலம் சில பெற்றோருக்கு விளங்கிக்கொள்ளவே முடியாது போகும். அதுவும் சில பாட்டிகள் பாட்டாமார் உள்ள வீடுகளில் குழந்தைகளுக்குத் தமிழ் தெரியாவிட்டால் அவர்கள் பேசுவதை அம்முதியோர்களால் விளங்கிக் கொள்ள முடியாது துன்புறுவதையும் காணுகிறோம். ஆகவே எமது எதிர்காலச் சந்ததியினர் தமிழ் பேசும் தமிழர்களாகவும் தம் அடையாளத்தை இழக்காதவர்களாகவும் வாழ செம் மொழியாம் தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்கவேண்டியது அவசியமாகும். இன்று தமிழ் மொழியைக் கற்கும் மாணவர்கள் சிலர் பாடசாலைகளுக்கு வரும் போது ஆர்வமாக வருகிறார்களென்றும் காலப்போக்கில் அவர்களின் ஆர்வம் குறைவது மட்டுமன்றி இடையிலே நின்று விடுகிறார்களென்றும் கூறப்படுகிறது. இதற்கான காரணங்களை ஆசிரியர்கள் ஆராய்ந்து தங்களின் கற்பித்தல்முறைகளிலும், மாணவர்களை அணுகும் விதங்களிலும் சிறந்த செயற்பாடுகளைக் கையாளுவது முக்கியமாகும்.


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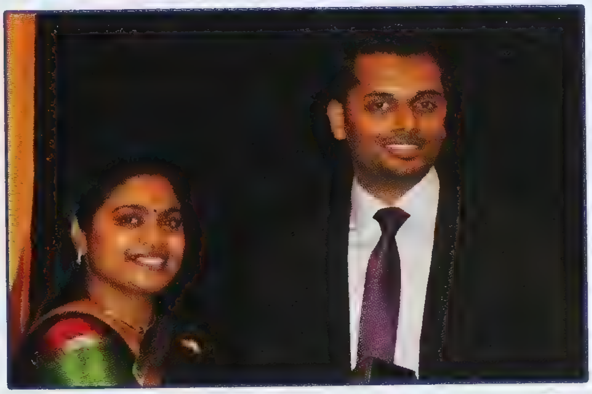
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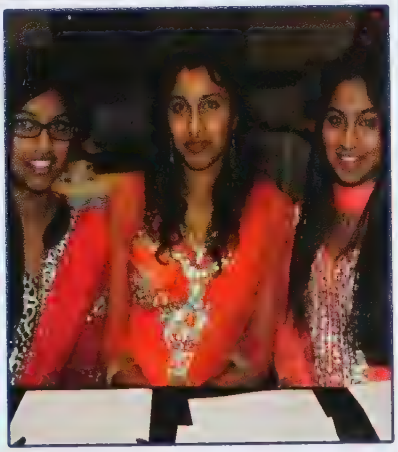












LESSONS IN RESILIENCE

By Rajanthi Manivannan, B.A, CMA
Operations & Strategy Manager. Rockefeller Foundation



From advocacy work, to innovative businesses serving the poor, to changing the landscape of city planning, the path to success is clear: be resilient.

My career path took a bit of a detour almost three years ago, and I haven't looked back since. I started out following a fairly predictable route, graduating from University of Waterloo in Economics, eventually becoming a CMA and working at a string of Canadian private sector orgs spanning seven years: RBC, Canadian Tire and Rogers.

The last three years, I worked at an advocacy organization in Northern Ghana, a social enterprise in Kenya and Uganda, and I'm currently at a start-up non-profit fully funded by the Rockefeller Foundation in New York City. The past few years, I have been pushed outside of my comfort zone - required to live and work in regions and sectors that were unfamiliar. The lessons learned could fill multiple journals, but I wanted to focus on one in particular. Both my colleagues and I have faced many obstacles, disappointments, frustrations, lack-of-progress and a general sense of hopelessness. In spite of all of that, in order to drive lasting change, resilience is what matters most.

Whether it means resilient leaders, systems, or organizations, resilience encompasses three key characteristics: grit, courage and commitment. I have had the pleasure of working with many change makers/organizations who embody those characteristics. It is these people who motivate me when I feel all hope is lost and who push me to challenge my boundaries.

Grit: Short-term focus on tasks at hand, a willingness to slog through broken systems with limited resources, and pragmatic problem-solving skills.

One of my colleagues at the non-profit Acumen, Natalie Grillon, a former Peace Corps volunteer and recent MBA graduate, embodies grit. She worked in a remote area of war-torn Northern Uganda to develop an organic sesame business as part of Gulu Agricultural Development Company, which provides more than 40,000 smallholder farmers with access to international markets.

Overseeing a staff of 35 and a network of 50 buyers, Natalie woke up each day determined to grow the business by training more farmers and improving their product quality. Some days she was holed up analyzing financials and others she was loading trucks for shipment. She has to be both an empathetic listener and stern director, often at the cost of not always being "liked" - a tradeoff she had to accept. She works 12-14 hours seven days a week and pushed through daily challenges and physical fatigue.

The sesame business is new to this part of Uganda and has already increased the yields of more than 10,000 farmers, providing them with new income that can go to school fees or production tools. Farmers, who until recently lived in IDP-camps, now live lives of freedom, dignity and choice. For Natalie, the unrelenting pace of work and many headaches are worth it.

LESSONS IN RESILIENCE..... CONTD....

Courage: Action in the face of fear and embracing the unknown. In Ghana, the advocacy organization I worked at, NORSAAC, focused on two key programmatic areas: Women's Rights & Governance. It's no easy task advocating against decades (if not, centuries) old held notions about the role of women in society.

Hafsah Sey Sumani, co-founder of NORSAAC, has made significant contributions to the feminist movement in the northern region, particularly in the area of female political involvement. As a young student in highschool, she was selected to go to Malawi for a Unicef-funded conference on HIV/AIDS in Africa. From there, she met many activists from across the continent who were working tirelessly for the cause. Surrounded by passionate changemakers, she was inspired to start a movement within her own community to address this taboo issue. Along with Awal (NORSAAC's other co-founder), during their first year of university, they started over 30 HIV/AIDS clubs across Northern Ghana. Using their own funds for start-up costs, this small project eventually grew to cover other districts within the northern region.

Hafsah soon realized that issues affecting women - child marriages, sexual harassment, land ownership rights, etc - couldn't effectively be addressed in government policy without female representation in Parliament. At that time (and this trend still continues today), female representation in Parliament, especially in the northern region, was non-existent. The scope of NORSAAC then grew to incorporate women's governance through the support of female candidates. They ran a variety of programs - education, leadership programs, training, community-level advocacy with traditional leaders, religious leaders, youth and men - leading up to election time. Their efforts worked and the region saw a significant rise in female representation in the northern district assemblies (from 10 positions held to 38).

Not only does she run an organization full-time, she is a teacher by profession, received her Masters in Integrated Development Studies, and is currently completing her second Masters in Local Economic Development. On top of all that, she is the mother to 3 young kids (all under the age of 10) and does all of the cooking to feed a family of 15 (which includes her husband's extended family).

When I speak to her in awe of all that she has managed to accomplish (more than some of us will do our entire lifetime), she is very nonchalant about her successes. She shrugs her shoulders and says, "if you consider the challenges you face as barriers to success, then you'll never get anything done. You just have to find a way around your challenges," she tells me simply. In her case, courage is an understatement considering the fierce cultural barriers she faced in a village which strongly devalues female education and a belief that a woman's role is to serve her husband. She lives her life as an example of what can be possible with hard work, a little persuasion and some serious time management skills.

Commitment: Long-term optimism and focus on big-picture goals. I'm based in New York City now, working at an organization called 100 Resilient Cities. The mandate is ambitious, overwhelming and optimistic. 100RC was founded last year, on the Rockefeller Foundation's 100th anniversary. It was created to help cities around the world build resilience to the social, economic and physical challenges that are an increasing part of the 21st century, and to implement the decades of ground-breaking research and thinking the foundation has done in the field of urban planning.

LESSONS IN RESILIENCE..... CONTD....

When we talk about resilience, we're not just talking about the shocks cities face - fires, earthquakes, floods - we're also talking about the stresses that weaken a city over time - crime, endemic violence, a bad transportation system, etc. After all, cities have been destroyed by stresses like crime or changing macroeconomic trends - slower, insidious forces, rather than one-off events. It is the confluence of three trends that makes our work necessary. First is the immense scale of growing urbanization around the world; second is globalization; and third is climate change.

With a global population climbing towards a peak of 9 billion by mid-century, 70% of whom will live in cities, in increasingly fragile ecosystems, the number of people at risk at any given time or place is unprecedented. At the same time, cities are more interconnected than ever before, and a system failure in one city can cause problems across the globe - the Ebola outbreak is a powerful recent example. Additionally, climate change places serious new pressures on urban systems. We hope to address these three trends by accomplishing three key goals:

- To build social, economic, and physical resilience in our 100 cities
- To leverage the power of the private sector by establishing and fostering the market for resilience building tools
- To foster a global practice of resilience that impacts governments, businesses, NGOs and other sectors of society, even outside our network.

Let me give a hypothetical example:

Say a city is seeking to build a road. Under normal circumstances, the department of transportation would plan, secure the funds for, and build that road. But resilience planning would change that. Instead of just building a road, the road would be raised, to help prevent flooding. And it would be well lit in order to prevent crime, and give people a better and safer way to walk home from work. And it would connect two communities that otherwise weren't integrated. And it would connect a hospital to an area that didn't have one. The CRO would work across departments of government that would normally be siloed to achieve that. Now, apply this thinking to everything a city does, with a special focus on the challenges the city faces, and you have resilience thinking.

The massive scale of this bold mission can be overwhelming, as we continue to face many implementation practicalities, political barriers and city red tape. However, in the face of all of that, we are making positive strides by investing in global urban resilience leaders who will carry this message and work forward.

The key to all of what I've spoken about - whether it's advocacy, building businesses in the developing world or nudging city officials around inclusive urban planning - is the importance and necessity of resilient global leaders. These individuals need to bring exceptional skills, business and political expertise to their work. But that is not enough. It's their ability to dig deep, roll up their sleeves and immerse themselves in the unglamorous trenches of seemingly intractable problems while remaining focused on long-term goals that allows them to buck the status quo and deliver meaningful change.

The above examples of all the people and organizations I have been privileged to work with exemplify the resilience it takes to drive lasting change on the ground. Above all, their experiences highlight not only what's needed to build new systems, but also, what's needed most to be a social impact leader. Too often we confuse management skills with leadership. We need to remain focused on building leaders who have the resilience to face stubborn problems head on for lasting social impact. The more we collectively define what it takes, the better we'll be able to identify and train this next generation. ✸

ASGC-AN IMPRESSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION

By Pranavan Ganeshalingam, iBBA
Chair, Canadian Tamil Professionals Association (CTPA)



It was back in 2008 when I had first heard about the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada (ASGC). This was my final year of high school at Middlefield Collegiate Institute and I had just got admitted to the International Bachelor of Business Administration degree at the Schulich School of Business at York University. I always knew that business was the field that I wanted to pursue but I didn't exactly know what opportunities were out there and the specific streams that I could pursue.

It was at this time that I attended my first Career Counselling Workshop at the Scarborough Civic Centre hosted by ASGC. This is when I began to step outside of my comfort zone and began to explore career options. This day long workshop was eye-opening for me. To this day I am grateful for the panel discussion session focussed on Business Studies with a panel of prominent business professionals.

I was elated as this to me was a bucket of gold, a bucket that held answers to my endless questions. This is where I got the opportunity to meet many established professionals from the Tamil community whom I could connect with and get advice from. I took this opportunity and I was so inspired by the information I received so much so that I was motivated to continue the conversation with a few panelists on a one-on-one basis. As such, I reached out to a few to meet for some mentorship and guidance to receive further advice and insight into certain career prospects. In particular, my meeting with a senior manager from TD Bank really provided a good sense of the corporate culture which drew me towards starting off my career with TD Bank, while I was still in university. Those meetings helped me significantly to better understand what was to come after high school. The guidance and mentorship that I received was invaluable. By attending the annual ASGC workshops, I was able to expand my professional network which helped me throughout my academic studies and now my career.

As the first to have attended university in my family, I truly valued the guidance and support that I received from the programs and services offered by this organization. It was comforting to know that there was an association that helped people like me fill the gap in knowledge. Though it can be overwhelming and intimidating when you don't know who you can go to for support, it is important to ask questions when trying to get advice on your career and future aspirations. After a few years of attending the Career Counselling Workshop hosted by the ASGC, I felt better prepared in my academic pursuits and felt a lot more confident in the direction I was taking with my career goals. While I was completing my last year of university, I found myself at the Job Connect 2012 event at the Markham Civic Centre in the Spring of 2012. Here I again had the opportunity to connect with established professionals in my field of interest. This was another great event to network and meet like-minded business professionals in a variety of specific fields. It was conversation at this event that opened my options to a career in the public sector.


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AN IMPRESSIVE COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION .... CONTD...

Shortly thereafter, having gone through a rigorous application process, I was hired as part of the Ontario Internship Program (OIP) with the Ontario Public Service (OPS) working as a Financial Analyst in the Ministry of Education. With the guidance of a few Tamil Professionals working in the OPS, I later found myself working for the Office of the Budget and Treasury Board as an Economist. Two years later, I currently work as an Economic Specialist in the Ministry of Finance working on the Ontario Budget. The guidance and mentorship I've been fortunate enough to receive, from the beginning of my career until now, has played a key role in my personal success. Outside of work, my positive experience with the programs and service provided by this organization has ignited my passion for supporting the emerging generation within our community to excel professionally in today`s changing environment. Currently, I am the Chair of the Canadian Tamil Professionals Association (CTPA). CTPA is a community-based organization focused on addressing the needs of emerging and established Tamil Professionals through professional networking, professional development and mentorship. We work closely with the Association of Sri Lankan Graduates of Canada to further our organizations` goal to build and support the success of Canadian Tamil community.

I am grateful to this association for constantly striving to help the community. If you are a student, either in high school or pursuing post-secondary education, I strongly encourage you to participate in ASGC's programs and services. ❋





SEX EDUCATION IN ONTARIO SCHOOLS - SEPTEMBER 2015

By Rukshan Para

Chair, Youth & Parents Association of Markham; Educator, Financial Consultant.



Ontario's sex education curriculum has become a taboo topic in Ontario politics lately as parents, educators and policy makers strive to find a balanced approach for the proposed policy. Walking a thin line has been the approach of many involved in the discussion based on the sensitive nature that the topic of sexuality invokes.

The Ontario Sexual Education Curriculum was last updated in 1998, the same year Google was founded. Since then we have seen the rise and fall of the dot com bubble, the advent of smartphones and social media part of daily life. These have cultivated new ways for information to be shared and retrieved.

The ancient Tamil culture is rich and vibrant and explores all aspects of life. Culturally in the modern Tamil community our views and discussion on sexuality have taken a conservative approach and have deferred to approaching the subject indirectly when being discussed. The modern Tamil community is generally conservative with their values placing a strong emphasis on cultural traditions passed down from predecessors with an underlying emphasis on modesty.

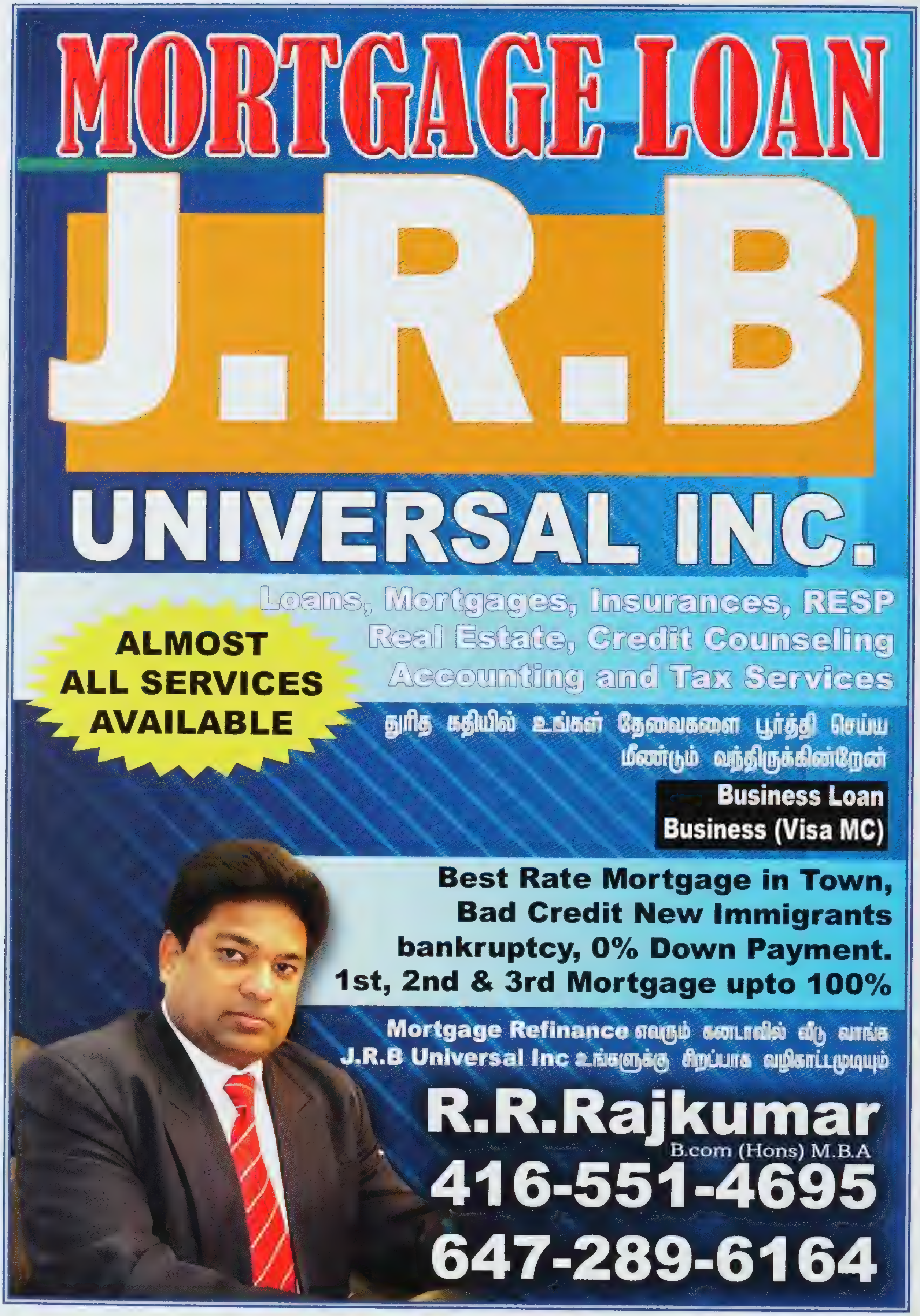
In my work in the Markham community working with many parents particularly from the Tamil community, sexuality has been brought up as a topic parents have difficulty directly speaking with their children. The reality is that children today are exposed to more sexual topics at a younger age than ever before due to the digitization of how information is being accessed. Children will either learn about sex from unfiltered sources that may be harmful to their psyche or learn directly from a safe source such as a loving parent or concerned guardian.

The Ontario government is attempting to bridge this gap by addressing this with their proposed sexual education curriculum that is relevant to the times we live in. This topic is not new as former Premiere Dalton McGuinty proposed a similar policy in 2010. Due to strong opposition from community and religious groups, the Premiere temporarily shelved the policy and its current manifestation has been brought back with the new majority Wynn government.

I firmly agree that the current sex education curriculum needs to be updated from its current form but how and what is to be included in the new curriculum requires greater engagement from the community especially from parents, educators and children.

A large Queen's Park protest was held by groups opposing the new curriculum to be implemented by September. As parents, we all want what is best for our children and empower them with wise decisions that will help them to be the most properly informed future citizens. Those opposing this new policy feel that the topics being exposed to children at a young age are inappropriate and unnecessary. This is the first time in 17 years the Ontario government will be updating the sex education curriculum, let us take a closer look to see exactly what will be taught.

The current sexual educational curriculum being taught today is quite comprehensive and thorough but lacks modern issues in sexuality faced by youth today.


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SEX EDUCATION IN ONTARIO SCHOOLS... CONTD...

At a high level the new curriculum in what children will be learning in Junior and Primary schooling include the following:

Grade 1:	In addition to what they are already learning, proper names for body parts and genitals. Alongside with potential dangers of online activities.
Grade 2:	Students to learn about the stages of development and related body changes. Also, introduce the some elements of violence, verbal and physical.
Grade 3:	To learn about homosexuality and same-sex relationships. "Identify the characteristics of healthy relationships" and "respect".
Grade 4:	Students to learn about online safety, puberty, text messaging - especially the risk of "sexting" (sending sexually explicit digital pictures over the phone).
Grade 5:	Students to learn more about "sexting" and how they are to protect their privacy online. To identify and learn in detail about male and females parts.
Grade 6:	Students to be taught about masturbation and healthy relationships and consent
Grade 7 & 8:	What is "sexting"? In addition to be informed about sexually transmitted diseases.

For instance, we have to be sensitive to religious concerns. Some religions including prevalent Catholic belief systems advise against the use of contraceptive devices and birth control. Yet Catholic school teachers are expected to teach this to their students.

Subsequently, how different cultures treat sexuality have not been taken into greater depth when engaging and consulting the values held by different cultural groups. Sensitivity has to be exercised and greater parental consultation is required especially for new immigrant families.

Regardless on your stance of the issue, everyone agrees some change is necessary to reflect sexuality in modern society. Children with continuous access to any device connected to the Internet can get access to information that was not readily available in previous generations. How this information impacts an impressionable mind has to be the ultimate focus on how we shape the discourse on this matter.

This is a topic that is and will continue to generate a strong buzz in the community. More Tamil parents need to speak up so our unique views are heard. Parental consultation has to be a focus as our children and future generations will be greatly impacted by this new curriculum. How we as community organizers, concerned parents and educators engage in this subject and participate in the discussion is required now.

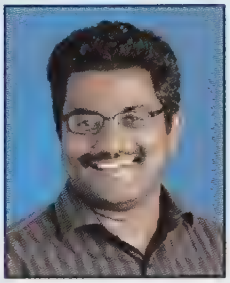
I strongly feel that a balanced approach has to be taken with greater parental consultation. The necessity for an update is there, but how it is carried out can be shaped by us. Let your opinions be noted with your elected officials, write, email or phone your elected School Board Trustee and Member of Provincial Parliament to get more information and see how you can be part of the discussion.

The changes are delimited in a 244-page health and physical education curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 and a 224-page document for Grades 9 to 12.

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1-8: Health and Physical Education, 2015 (revised)
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/health1to8.pdf
The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, 2015
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf ★

LESSONS FROM AUVAIYAR FOR PARENTS AND EDUCATORS

By Kandeepan Ganeshalingam
Vice Principal, Milliken Mills HS



As parents of two young children age 9 and 3 and as educators, we are always looking for new ways to support our children at home and our students at school to succeed. Just like our children, we can learn much both as parents and as educators from Auvaiyar and Aathisoodi. I should point out that by no means am I an expert in Aathisoodi or Auvaiyar. Growing up as a child, Aathisoodi was my first introduction to the Tamil alphabet. Aathisoodi is a collection of 109 moral phrases that start with the alphabets in the Tamil language and was written by Auvaiyar over thousand years ago. Here are some of the lessons which have captured my interest as a parent and an educator:

Importance of character education

Auvaiyar saw the importance of teaching our children moral values. It is for that reason; she incorporated the teaching of the alphabet with character education. Many school boards in Ontario strive to do the same. As a parent, you may have of heard of various character initiative in your child's school; including character matters, character development and monthly themes. At times as parents and educators we tend to focus on teaching the academics. How are we teaching our children good character? Children most often do not hear what we tell them but they observe carefully what we do and often imitate us. Are we as parents and educators being good role models? For instance, if we expect our children show compassion towards others, do we model that for them? Are we mindful about what our children are exposed to especially through television, music and now through social media? Do those materials exemplify good character values? You may be surprised by the impact television, music and social media have on your child. For example, as a child I watched the movie "Karnan"; the storey of Karnan in Mahabhratham and starred Sivaji Ganesan. That movie has had a tremendous amount of impact in my life; I have tried to live my life through some of the values that Karnan exemplified, including compassion, loyalty and integrity. What about the movies that promotes negative character? For example have you thought of what the impact many of the Tamil movies that promote gang lifestyles, alcoholism, drug and violence is having on your child?

Teaching Our Children to Build Passion for Learning

Auvaiyar advises us to "oothuvathu oliyel" or loosely translated means never stop learning. I believe the most important thing we develop through schooling is (1) we learn how to learn and (2) hopefully we develop a passion for learning. Many of us will not remember what we learned in elementary school or in high school (and perhaps even in post-secondary). What we do is develop the skills necessary to be lifelong learners. As parents and educators, we need to encourage our children to develop that passion for learning. Some ways we do this is by taking an interest what they are learning at school; discuss what they've learned at school every day and take the time to listen to them. We need to model the passion for learning; for instance, while your children are doing their homework, what are we as parents doing? Are we in front of a television or are we also engaged in some form of learning? Parts of helping students to build a passion for learning includes helping our children and students to explore what they are passionate about and are interested in learning.

LESSONS FROM AUVAIYAR FOR PARENTS ..... CONTD...

Not all children are going to be interested in medicine, law or engineering or interested studying at University. Our children and students may find programs that are offered in colleges or through the apprenticeship pathways. As parents we need to appreciate that and support our children. Ultimately, the goal is support our children find interests and strengths and to become passionate and lifelong learners.

Focusing on Literacy and Numeracy

Auvaiyar emphasizes the importance of literacy and numeracy (mathematics) in the phrase "en eluthu igazhel". The focus in many school boards in Ontario continues to be literacy and numeracy. One of the priorities of Ontario Ministry of Education as articulated in the recently released "Achieving Excellence" document in Mathematics (or numeracy). How are you supporting your children develop their literacy skills? Are you reading with them? I should point out that it does not have to be English text that you're reading. Do the children at your house spend at least half hour each day reading? How are you encouraging a positive attitude towards mathematics with your children?

Teaching Our Children to be Resilient

Once again if we go back to Aathisoodi, we see the phrase "ookammathu kaividel" or be resilient (or persevere). As adults our days may very stressful. Many parents I can encountered believe that children's life is stress free and all they need to focus on is their education. We forget children and teenagers deal with their own set of stress, whether it is dealing with the stress of achieving in school, dealing with relationship issues, bullying, mental health and other stresses related to growing up. How are we supporting them especially when they encounter failures? Are we encouraging our student to view failures as some of the greatest learning opportunity? I know some of the best lessons I've learned in my life were as a result of failures. Do we discourage failures that result in our children and students become afraid of new learning opportunities. How are we helping them to build confidence?

Summary

I believe as parents and educators, if we focus our energy on helping our children develop great character, become passionate learners with strong literacy and numeracy foundation and resilient individuals; we have done our job in supporting their growth that leads to success and well being.

★

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

- Nelson Mandela

You are always a student, never a master. You have to keep moving forward.

- Conrad Hall

You don't choose your family. They are God's gift to you, as you are to them.

- Desmond Tutu

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YEAR	PRESIDENT	SECRETARY	TREASURER
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1990	N. Pradeepan	S. Gnananayakan	M. Baskaranathan
1991	N. Pradeepan	S. Gnananayakan	M. Baskaranathan
1992	A. S. Kanthasamy	S. Gnananayakan	S. Thirumuruga
1993	A. S. Kanthasamy	C. Ramanathan	S. Thirumuruga
1994	S. Sathiamoorthy	C. Ramanathan	V. Nantheeswarar
1995	S. Sathiamoorthy	C. Ramanathan	V. Nantheeswarar
1996	M. Atputhanathan	K. Wijeyathungam	P. Vettivelu
1997	M. Atputhanathan	K. Wijeyathungam	P. Vettivelu
1998	K. Wijeyathungam	S. Sathiamoorthy	V. Ratnasingam
1999	K. Wijeyathungam	S. Sivanesan	A. Rasaratnam
2000	S. Sivanesan	C. Ramanathan	A. Rasaratnam
2001	S. Sivanesan	C. Ramanathan	K. Kanthasamy
2002	C. Ramanathan	V. Manivannan	K. Kanthasamy
2003	C. Ramanathan	Surren Balendran	A. Rasaratnam
2004	K. Theivendirarajah	Surren Balendran	A. Rasaratnam
2005	C. Ramanathan	Yoga Arulnamby	Arun Senathirajah
2006	P. Kanagaretnam	Yoga Arulnamby / C. Ramanathan	Arun Senathirajah
2007	K. Theivendirarajah	C. Ramanathan	Yaso Somalingam
2008	Surren Balendran	C. Ramanathan	Yaso Somalingam
2009	Yoga Arulnamby	V. Manivannan	Suganja Sinnathamby
2010	Yaso Somalingam	Pon. Balendran	Suganja sinnathamby
2011/2012	Yaso Somalingam	Raj Thavaratnasingam	Thiva Kulasingam
2013	Pon Balendran	Raj Thavaratnasingam	Thiva Kulasingam
2014/2015	Pon Balendran	C. Ramanathan	Thiva Kulasingam


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We wish to convey our sincere thanks to:

◊ The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) for supporting the ASGC to conduct the Career Counseling workshop in Markham in November 2014 at Middlefield CI. We owe our sincere thanks to Initha Subramaniam, Suganja Sinnathamby, Janani Pathy and Kandeephan Ganeshalingam in organizing this popular event.

◊ Dr. Mahesan Srivamadevan for delivering the keynote address at the Career Counseling Workshops for high school students in Novemebr 2014.

◊ Mr. Philip Parappally, Mr. Cecil Roach, Ms. Camille Logan of YRDSB, and Trustee Juanita Nathan from Markham City for their greeting speeches at the above workshops.

◊ Moderators and Presenters of the Career Counseling Workshop for High School Students and the Guest Speakers at the Parents' Sessions for scarificing their valuable times and helping ASGC to conduct these workshop successfully.

◊ Volunteers, mostly students, for helping the ASGC in conducting the above workshop.

◊ Canadian Tamil Alumni Association (CTAA), Canadian Tamil Medical Association (CTMA) and Sri Lankan Accountants Association of Canada (SAAC) for their collabora tion in organizing the Career Counselling Workshop for high school students.

◊ Tamil television and radio stations, particularly TVI, Tamil One, CMR, CTR, Vannakam FM and Geethavani for broadcasting our programs and events to the community.

◊ Tamil newspapers for publicizing our programs and activities.

◊ Nel Ketharanathan and Pon Balendran for printing the tickets for the fund raising film show and the annual dinner.

◊ Pon Balendran, Director, MNA Engineering Ltd., for permitting the ASGC Executive Committee to conduct meetings in his office.

◊ The Executive Committee 2014 - 15 for their dedication and committment.

◊ All kind hearted entrepreneurs and professionals for generously supporting our activities by advertising in this Silver Jubilee edition of "FOCUS 2015".

◊ Last but not least for the wonderful cooperation and understanding of the Fine Print & Gift for printing this colourful magazine in a timely fashion.


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